









Japan

# THE MODERN WORLD

## A SURVEY OF HISTORICAL FORCES

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# JAPAN

*Some Phases of her Problems and Development*

By INAZO NITOBÉ

A.M., Ph.D., LL.D., Dr. jur., Dr. Soc. Sc., etc.

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To the Memory  
of his Friend  
T. T.  
Who died in the Prime of Manhood  
Far from Home  
Who attended the Writer like a Dutiful Son  
Who helped him like a Wise Counsellor  
Who cheered him as a Delightful Companion  
In Gratitude and Affection  
This Book is Dedicated

## FOREWORD

By the RT. HON. H. A. L. FISHER

MOST people in England want to know a great deal more about Japan. Yet how small is the number of our compatriots who have travelled in the country, or profess an intimacy with its peoples and problems ! English students find the Japanese language very difficult to acquire, and I understand that among the Japanese, who are not ordinarily gifted as linguists, a fluent knowledge of English is the rarest achievement. Of all Western interpreters of Japan, Lafcadio Hearn was probably the most accomplished. He was drawn to the country by a deep, instinctive sympathy, he lived in it, taught in it, and married a Japanese wife. Yet I doubt if he was understood in the land of his adoption. A beautiful memorial of him, written by the Japanese lady who was for many years his wife, showed that a large part of his nature had escaped her powers of minute, delicate, but very limited observation. So difficult is it for this people of the Far East fully to appreciate the spirit of the West. Dr. Nitobé is a rare exception. He has a brilliant command of English. From his experience at Geneva he knows Western politics, and many of the leading actors on the Western political stage. He is also a devoted son of his own country. This volume which he has written on Japan is not exactly the kind of book which an Englishman would have written, but for this very reason it is all the more

instructive, for the reader will learn from it not only a number of important things about Japan, but the things which a gifted Japanese considers to be most material to the right understanding of his country.

*Oxford, 1931*

## PREFACE

It was three years ago that the invitation to write the present volume came from London and was forthwith accepted. It was on the eve of my departure from Geneva—from the International Secretariat of the League of Nations, where I had been serving for seven years.

I accepted the invitation in the hope that on my return home I could work in quiet retirement. But my hope was frustrated, and, from the moment of my arrival, scarcely a day has passed, except during illness, when I could sit down undisturbed and write for any consecutive number of hours.

I feel under obligation to make this apology, because the announcement of this volume was made long ago, and I have had several inquiries sent me as to the time of its appearance.

There is another reason why I make a personal reference regarding the delay in issuing this book.

During my absence of so many years, there appeared in Japan many works relating to our country—works of erudition, of painstaking research or of quick perception—without scanning which I did not feel like taking up my pen.

So much by way of apology. Now a word about the plan. My original intention was a bigger volume. It was to contain separate chapters on National Defence, Foreign Relations, Oversea Possessions, and Contemporary Literature. But time has not allowed me to carry out this first idea.



In writing this book, I have had constantly before my mind's eye a few intelligent English readers who would take it up not merely for entertainment, but who would be patient enough to peruse it, in order to understand the ideas and motives underlying changes now transpiring in Japan. I expect my readers to be lenient towards my weakness for numbers. Perhaps I have indulged too freely in my partiality for statistics, though I must say that I have omitted several tables in the final revision of the manuscript.

In order to make the numbers more easy of comprehension by English readers, I have put the denominations of Japanese money, weights and measures in English equivalents. In doing so I did not go into minutest detail. Round numbers are all that I cared to present. Hence, instead of calculating a *koku* as 4·96005 bushels, or a *cho* as 2·40564 acres, or a *yen* as 2s. 0·581d., I put down 5 bushels, 2½ acres, and 2s., respectively. I have not aspired to scientific precision.

I must ask for the leniency of my readers when they come across the same subject in several places. For instance, they will see something about forestry or fishery in the chapter on Geography; then again in that on Economics. Likewise, the question of labour is scattered over two or three chapters—once in connection with politics, at another time with population. A little careful perusal will show that the same subject is approached from different angles and that one chapter presents a phase of the question not touched upon in another.

In the preparation of this book my wife has been a constant and untiring assistant. I also owe much to a few kind and sympathetic friends who helped me in different ways, and to whom I feel under deep

obligation. To Miss Ruth Thompson I am indebted for the bibliography judiciously compiled for this volume. But I owe most of all to the editor of the series, the Right Honourable H. A. L. Fisher, who has gone over the whole manuscript in a most painstaking manner and suggested many improvements, consisting mainly in eliminating sentences and paragraphs, in order to bring the size of the present work into harmony with other volumes of the series.

INAZO NITOBÉ.

*Koishikawa,*

*Tokyo.*

*September 1, 1931.*



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## CHAPTER I

# GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THEIR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INFLUENCES

"A noble man cannot be indebted for his culture to a narrow circle. The world and his native land must act on him."—  
GOETHE.

### I. JAPAN'S GEOGRAPHICAL SITUATION IN RELATION TO THE ASIATIC CONTINENT

WHEN one speaks of Japan, one has usually in mind Japan Proper, exclusive of her new acquisitions—Korea, Formosa and South Saghalien; and we shall follow this usage in the present volume, except when it is self-evident or specifically mentioned that the name is employed in a more inclusive sense. In order, however, to take a bird's-eye view of her location and size, a table is here given of the area of the principal islands that constitute the Empire.

In area, then, Japan Proper occupies  $57\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of the whole Empire and in population 71 per cent. The country extends for 3000 miles from the southern extremity of Formosa at  $22^{\circ}$ , a short distance from the Tropic of Cancer, up to  $50^{\circ}$  north latitude, which cuts the island of Saghalien in twain. The country has naturally a long coast-line of over 34,350 miles.

A gift more of Vulcan than of Pluto, the whole Empire consists of a long series of mountain peaks jutting out of the Pacific Ocean, off the eastern coast of the Asiatic continent. Its innumerable islands may easily be divided into three arcs, each embracing



a sea, with the continent as its opposite shore—the Sea of Okhotsk in the north, the Sea of Japan in the middle, and of Tung Hai (Eastern Sea) in the south. Were the present sea-level lowered by only 100 fathoms, the whole of Japan, inclusive of Formosa and Saghalien, would join the continent, the Sea of Japan then forming a vast lake thirty times the size of Lake Baikal.

Principal Islands.	Number of Adjacent Small Islands.	Area in square miles.		
		Principal Islands.	Total with Adjacent Small Islands.	Per cent.
Mainland . . . .	193	86,305	88,873	33.52
Shikoku . . . .	75	6,856	7,246	2.73
Kiūshū . . . .	158	13,768	16,201	6.11
Hokkaidō (excluding the Chishima) . . . .	44	30,114	34,084	12.86
Chishima or Kurile Islands (31 islands) . .	—	6,024	3,970	1.50
Sado . . . . .	—	335	329	0.12
Oki . . . . .	1	130	135	0.05
Awaji . . . . .	1	218	228	0.09
Iki . . . . .	1	51	55	0.02
Tsushima . . . .	5	262	274	0.10
Riūkiū (55 islands) . .	—	934	922	0.35
Ogasawarajima or Bonin Islands (20 islands) . .	—	27	40	0.02
Total . . . . .	478	145,024	152,357	57.47
Chōsen (Korea) . . .	1,018	82,926	84,949	32.04
Taiwan (Formosa) . .	14	13,807	13,840	5.22
Bōkotō (Pescadores) .	63	25	49	0.02
Karafuto (Japanese Saghalien) . . . .	2	13,928	13,934	5.25
Grand Total . . . .	1,575	255,710	265,129	100.00

The same Vulcan has dotted the whole length and breadth of Japan with countless spots of scenic charm. These have fortunately fallen to the lot of an appreciative folk with a keen eye for the beautiful.

Our landscape is generally of a picturesque and enchanting nature, conducive to sentimentality, rather than of an awe-inspiring character; though the sublime is not lacking in the Alpine interior of the country—as yet little explored.

There is a strain of tenderness and melancholy in the scenery of Japan which disposes her sons and daughters

“ To look on Nature, not as in the hour  
Of thoughtless youth, but hearing oftentimes  
The still, sad music of humanity,  
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power  
To chasten and subdue.”

From the geographical distribution of the Japanese land fauna and flora, it has long been surmised by scientists that the islands were connected with the Asiatic continent until quite late in geological history. According to Yabe and Tayama, two eminent geologists, “ The sea floor now encircling the Japanese Islands to the depth of some 720 m., on the average, was once a land surface, and the land submerged below the sea-level in a time geologically not much remote from the present. Prior to this great submergence of land, the Japanese Islands were some 720 m. more elevated than they are at present, and directly connected with the Asiatic continent.”

Constituting a part of the great circum-Pacific fold, formed in the Tertiary period, all these arcs were once connected with Asia, even as late as the Quaternary epoch, and their fauna and flora attest the closest relationship with the continent. For man, too, Nature has provided stepping-stones for easy crossing from every direction. The passage from Kamchatka to Hokkaido is dotted by the continuous chain of the Kuriles, aptly called in Japanese, Chishima, or “ A Thousand Isles.” Likewise, the

passage from southern China or the Malay Archipelago, through Formosa and the Ryukyu (Loo-Choo), is open even for primitive sea-faring craft. From the port of Fusan to Shimonoseki is not much more than 100 miles, as the crow flies. Between the Korean port and Tsushima the distance is about 30 miles, and between the latter and Iki 40 miles; thence to Karatsu in Kyushu only 25 miles. These facilities, provided by Nature, may well be compared with those afforded by the Hebrides and the Orkneys in the north of Britain, and by the English Channel Islands in the south.

We can very well conceive the possibility of rather free intercourse between the continent and the Japanese Islands in prehistoric times. We confess our inability to follow the noble fancy of Mr. Macmillan T. Brown,<sup>1</sup> who sees traces of great sunken empires round about the district of Ponape and Yap, where the Japanese race played a leading rôle. If we cannot go so far as that, we can at least imagine a time when the members of the continental branch of the Japanese exchanged frequent visits with their insular brothers. Can we not see a historical parallel in this regard with the part that the Ionians in Asia Minor took in the mediation between Greece and the East? "Maritime peoples," says Curtius,<sup>2</sup> "land in small bands, gradually introduce themselves among the natives. The consequences are combinations, followed by the most important results; but no sudden revolutions in the state of the nations ensue, as in the case of mainland immigrations."

This geographical propinquity was of the greatest importance in directing the ethnological and historical fate of the people. It still is a factor of the utmost

<sup>1</sup> *Journ. of Race Development*, Vol. 5, pp. 151-9.

<sup>2</sup> *History of Greece*, Ward's translation, Vol. 1, p. 42.

moment in determining what place in the sun Japan should occupy. As in times past it was the cul-de-sac of Eurasia, whither migrated the adventurers of all races, and where the defeated took refuge, so is it at present to be the meeting-place of the East and of the West. Here, within the precincts of Japan, will either be fought the conflict between the East and the West or be built a temple, as on the isle of Delos, where the nations will meet unarmed and bring into harmony the discordant notes of nations and races.

Together with all these advantages of communication, Japan enjoys the benefits of isolation. Had there been an upheaval of 100 feet in the bottom of the Japan Sea, "Nippon" would have been a mere geographical name, a remote region of the Korean peninsula. Very truly does Captain Mahan write: "The security and isolation of an insular position contribute, as nothing else can, to the strength of that quality in states which in men we call personality; and in states, as in men, no other quality is so influential." It was Japan's geographical separation that saved her from the devastations of the barbarous hordes of the deserts of Central Asia, who swamped and wrought havoc from time to time in China. Once in the thirteenth century did they invade our shores, but they had no luck—thanks largely to the "divine wind," or to the maritime storm. Again, early in the twentieth century, did another continental power make a similar attempt; but she, too, had to share the fate of Xerxes at Salamis.

Spiritually, too, far from being an unmixed evil, insularity proves a boon if rightly viewed. An islander may turn his back to the ocean and cramp and crook his fancy among the narrow mountain paths; he may cast his eyes on the sea and let his

imagination roam the boundless horizon, listening to "the mighty waters rolling evermore."

## 2. ATMOSPHERIC CHARACTERISTICS

The great length of the country allows every variety of climate, particularly as regards temperature. The annual average temperature of the northern frontier is  $32^{\circ}$  Fahrenheit and of the southern limit  $75^{\circ}$ . The more thickly inhabited regions lie between the isothermal lines of  $41^{\circ}$  and  $62^{\circ}$  Fahrenheit, thus including what Köppen, a high authority on climatology, calls the mesothermal and microthermal climates—climatic zones most stimulating to human activity. As far as warmth is concerned, the climate is by no means unfavourable to the physical welfare of man or beast or to the production of grains and every kind of vegetable and fruit.

The climate of Japan depends primarily on the monsoons, which in turn depend on the meteorological changes on the continent. Near Werchoyansk there is formed the so-called cold pole in winter, with a minimum monthly average of  $60^{\circ}$  below zero in January, causing an anti-cyclonic area over Eastern Siberia, whence spread cold winds all over the East. This north-west winter monsoon reaches Japan in October and continues until February. After the lapse of two months the south-east summer monsoon begins in April and lasts into September, due to the warm air blowing from the Pacific Ocean.

The country is subject to frequent and frightful visitations of rotary storms or cyclones in early summer, and of typhoons in late summer and autumn. Starting in the Pacific Ocean about the tenth latitude north, they proceed northwards, half of them striking China and the rest taking a north-

easterly direction over Japan, almost yearly spreading destruction by sea and land.

The semi-tropical character of the Japanese climate comes most into prominence when the regular rainy season arrives early in June and continues, with rare intermissions, for about four weeks. Because this is the season when the plum ripens, it is known as the *bai-wu* (Plum Rain) or *tsuyu* (dew). From a sanitary and psychological point of view, this is the most trying part of the year; but rice culture would be impossible without it. The season ends dramatically with thunderstorms, and is inevitably followed by warm weather. The ceaseless drizzle of a month's duration seems to affect both mind and body to an appreciable degree. It is said that prices fall on the stock and market exchanges during this period, even when there are no apparent reasons for the slump. It is well known that most sickness and suicides occur in the months of May, July and August, though mortality is greatest in winter months. Labour troubles, too, as in most other countries, abound in these months.

The succeeding spell of oppressively warm weather lasts till the end of September. Between the 1st and the 10th of this month occurs with marvellous regularity a violent hurricane called the "210th" or "220th day," counting from the New Year. As this is the time when the rice plant is in flower and the weather decides the fate of the rice crop—our "staff of life"—this date is always awaited with much anxiety, as if the economic life of the nation hung upon the sky—which it virtually does.

Thus Japan does not lack storms, regular and irregular, and, if Professor Huntington's<sup>1</sup> hypothesis is right, she certainly ought to be among the foremost

<sup>1</sup> *Civilization and Climate*, p. 133.

of the nations of the earth in human energy and mental activity. Changes of temperature are more stimulating than uniformity, and favour the growth of a virile race. "In Asia," says Huntington, "Japan is the only place where cyclonic storms are at all abundant." He notes the similarity of Japan in this respect to Britain, France, Germany, parts of Scandinavia and the northern part of Italy, together with western Austria and the Baltic region. What a change of opinion this from that of Montesquieu,<sup>1</sup> who attributed the "stubbornness" and "perverse-ness" of the people of Japan to its climate!

It is to be noted that the climate of Japan partakes more of a continental than of a maritime character. This by no means implies that the two important ocean currents—one cold, known as the *Oyashiiwo* (parent-tide), flowing from the Behring Sea and passing along the eastern coast, and the other warm, called the *Kuroshiwo* or the Black Current, flowing from the tropics—do not affect the climate, since they give rise to fogs wherever they meet, and to general moisture. We have on the average, throughout the year, four sunny days for every three wet days.

The north-eastern provinces are so situated that they are exposed to the cold wind from the continent, which condenses the moisture wafted from the Pacific, so they are frequently visited in winter by heavy snowstorms. In some localities the ground is covered throughout this season with four or five feet of snow—often more—affording excellent facilities for ski-ing. Yet amusements cannot compensate financially for economic disadvantages. It has been calculated by one prefecture that the loss accruing from snow amounts to £5,000,000 yearly; by another, £3,000,000. The loss is caused by the injuries done

<sup>1</sup> *The Spirit of Laws*, Book XIV, chap. 15.

to buildings, trees and standing crops. Besides these material losses, the snow is blamed for the blindness so frequent in these districts and attributed to glaring reflection from it as well as to smoke in the house, when people are confined indoors during the long winter months. It is well known that continuous confinement under shelter deprives both beasts and men of the proper exercise of their muscles and brings on a degeneration of the bones. Another effect of the heavy snow—half material and half moral—is the necessity, with all its consequences, of providing temporary schoolrooms for children living at a distance. Add to all these the expenses, unknown in a warmer clime, of thick clothing and fuel, and the idylls of a *Snow-bound* home, so beautifully described by a Quaker poet of New England, are robbed of their charm, and the six-petalled crystal flower deteriorates into an onerous burden.

According to Mr. Fleure, the climate and environmental conditions of this country seem to have limited the multiplication of sensory endings in the skin. That this accounts for the lesser general irritability, the greater equanimity of the artistic inspiration of our people, there is no doubt. The heavy mists and fogs which “obscure the burdened air” rob objects of their individuality and make of them mere types of things. Is not this power of generalization an essential element of all great art? The sombre rains subdue our natural buoyancy of spirit; but, to the semi-amphibious, the rain which “raineth every day” does not give the disagreeable sensation that it does to a continental people. As to clouds, an illuminating study may be made of their effect upon the Oriental and the Westerner. To the latter the term *cloud* is always associated with darkness, gloom, sullenness of temper. To the former,



not always. On the contrary, this term is oftener used to inspire a sense of grandeur, loftiness, even of brightness. One wonders how Western peoples have been reading the Bible without associating the cloud with radiance. When Moses went up into the mountain, a cloud covered it, and the glory of the Lord shone like a devouring fire on the top of it. Ezekiel speaks of the house filled with a cloud and the court full of brightness. Matthew, in relating the story of the transfiguration of Christ, speaks of "a bright cloud" overshadowing the witnesses, and a voice speaking from it. Hosea alludes to goodness as a moving cloud, and Solomon speaks of the clouds as dropping dew. As to rain, has it ever been referred to in the Scriptures as a dreary, uncomfortable visitation? Enough of biblical lore! In Japanese poetry, the cloud plays as frequent a rôle as does mist in art. Professor Frederic Starr has put in a nutshell the Japanese conception of scenic beauty in the following words: "Fuji bare and naked in a blaze of sunshine is beautiful; Fuji with its summit wrapped in cloud and mist is more beautiful; Fuji blotted out by fog until but a hint or line is left is most beautiful."

### 3. FAUNA, FLORA AND FOOD SUPPLY

Accessible on every side to outside influences, and connected with the continent in geological times, as the remains of the mammoth elephant prove—but deprived by Nature of useful native plants and animals—almost all cultivated plants and domestic animals are of foreign introduction. Yet, why should we speak of "foreign" introduction, when we, the inhabitants, are not ourselves autochthonous to the soil?

As far as their natural fauna is concerned, these islands are very rich, due partly to climatic conditions,

particularly those of humidity and temperature, and also to their proximity to the original home of all animated life. There are 240 species of mammals, of which 180 are said to be peculiar to the country. Of over 720 species of birds, about one-fourth are denizens of our region. The number of the species of fishes is computed at 1230. As to insects, over 40,000 species are counted.

As to domesticated animals and cultivated plants, our various ancestors must have brought these with them to provide themselves with the food and raiment which Nature denied them in their new home.

Of the imported domestic animals, none adapted itself to the climate with grace except the silkworm. The horse failed to find a congenial home in a land devoid of a dry atmosphere and a broad plain. The cattle found no succulent herb on the mountain side, thickly covered with coarse bamboo leaves. The season of the Plum Rain is a powerful obstacle to the speedy acclimatization of the foreign breeds of cattle and sheep. The disadvantages inherent in Nature were minimized, for in the precepts of Shinto the shedding of the blood of any animal was held to be highly displeasing to the gods. It was well that fish and cocoons have no blood to spill!

The Japanese, evidently of more southern origin, brought with them southern crops, and, by dint of perseverance, acclimatized these. Even in the last fifty years we have seen a fresh adaptation of rice to the cold climate of Hokkaido. There is nothing either in the flora or fauna of the country to distinguish them sharply from those of the maritime district of the continent. Perhaps the most apparent characteristics of the Japanese flora are certain species of wild pear and cherry, and a great wealth of maples. The extent of her flora may be gathered from the large

number of native plants, amounting to 17,087 species—classified as follows :—

Flowering plants	.	.	About 9000 species
Ferns.	.	.	" 700 "
Moss and Hepatic	.	.	" 2000 "
Mushrooms.	.	.	" 3500 "
Lichens	.	.	" 700 "
Sea-weeds (Marine algæ)	.	.	691 "
Fresh-water algæ	.	.	323 "
Slime molds (Mycetozoa)	.	.	173 "

As to foodstuff, the more important cereals—rice, barley, millet, wheat—are not indigenous to the soil. Similarly is this true of the domestic animal, as has been hinted above—except perhaps of the dog and the fowl. Interesting to the biologist is the fact that the native dog—at least the most common breed—with coarse hair and erect, pointed ears, at one time seen in every village, has entirely disappeared since the arrival of the so-called “foreign breed.” Likewise, the long-familiar pony and a small black variety of cattle, practically native to the country, have now yielded place to the Devon and the Ayrshire, the Swiss Brown and the Jersey; but, on account of the fine quality of its meat, the old breed of cattle is now most carefully tended, though it is difficult to get a pure strain, since it is largely crossed with all kinds of foreign breeds—notably with Holstein. But, on the whole, horned stock has been steadily multiplying and improving in quality as the demand for milk and meat increases. Cattle are raised, not in any large herds, but on a small scale by the peasantry. The consumption of meat by the Japanese is unbelievably small, being only  $2\frac{1}{2}$  lb. per head per year. Compare it with the 280 lb. eaten by the American !

The meagre supply of native meat is to a considerable extent compensated for by marine products.

These are the mainstay of the nation for its nitrogenous alimentation. The two ocean currents of which we have spoken extend the habitat of fishes, making our seas particularly abundant in their variety. The number of the finny tribes of Japanese waters amounts to over 1000 species, and if we count their varieties they amount to about 2500. The annual harvest of all the seas of the world is calculated at 10,000,000 tons, valued at £170,000,000. Of this Japan reaps one-third, or a harvest of 3,000,000 tons, worth £35,000,000. Fishery gives employment to nearly 1,500,000 inhabitants of about 2500 villages.<sup>1</sup> Their living depends mainly on the haul of some fifty-two kinds of fish—besides many species of shell-fish—of which the principal are herring, cod, sardine, tunny, salmon, crab, prawns, turbot, and bonito. Some varieties of shell-fish form a valuable item of export. Sea-weeds of different kinds, considered inedible or unpalatable in the West, are here turned to good culinary account, and are highly prized for the enormous amount of vitamins and iodine they contain. About 60 per cent. of the sea products are taken as food, and the remaining 40 per cent. are utilized for fertilizer and oil. According to the ordnance survey, there are 1,250,000 acres of foreshore, suited for agriculture, all along the coast of the country. Of this vast area, only 7 per cent. is exploited at present. An expert estimate puts the value of the possible annual production of food from this source at £60,000,000. When we remember that the average annual consumption of fish by a Japanese is 50 lb., as against 21 lb. by an American, we see at once the importance of the piscatory industry. One American writer, Dr. Gilbert, gives the following striking figures: "The diet of the United States is

<sup>1</sup> For further details compare chap. v. § 6.

made up of about 3 per cent. fish, as compared with 17 per cent. meats and poultry and 80 per cent. other foods, while the annual per capita fish consumption is 16 lb., with 200 lb. in Japan, 65 lb. in Great Britain, 52 lb. in Sweden, 44 lb. in Norway, and 30 lb. in Canada.”<sup>1</sup>

Besides the sea, the inland lakes and rivers are likewise an important source of fish supply. It has been suggested by more than one foreign writer that the relatively large size of the Japanese brain is to be ascribed to the abundant use of a fish diet, and the small number of cases of goitre to the consumption of sea-weed. There is an opinion, not yet fully corroborated by science, that fish oil is conducive to fecundity, and that therefore a fish-eating people is apt to increase in population much more rapidly than a nation of meat consumers or vegetarians.

As irrigation is practically for rice only, meadows for pasturage are almost unknown, land being too valuable for raising animals, except in the mountains. Horse-breeding was never extensive, and though, for military purposes, it was once greatly encouraged, it is again losing its importance, and the number of horses is steadily decreasing—this in spite of the Government policy of not letting it fall below the minimum standard of 1,500,000 head.

As to sheep, they have as yet shown no great promise of progress either in quantity or quality, in spite of the Government subsidies, which are given with the view of supplying at least a part of the increasing demand for wool. It seems that sheep are here particularly liable to parasitic infections and insect pests. Indeed, probably due to the moisture of the atmosphere, the country abounds in innumerable varieties of insects, of which zoologists count as many

<sup>1</sup> *The Food Supply of New England*, p. 36.

as 10,500. We may note one psychological effect of the multitudinous insect life. It has been remarked that the ancient Greeks (followed by the Romans) and the Japanese are the only peoples in whose literature the insect figures largely. About a dozen kinds of insects—such as the cicada, the grasshopper, the cricket, “the pine insect,” “the bell-ringer,” “the grass lark”—form a regular orchestra to give autumn concerts year after year.

If it is not too presumptuous for a Japanese to quote the following words from the pen of a well-known writer, he may be allowed to do so for the intrinsic value of the reflection. “Does not the place accorded to insect-melody, in the home-life as well as in the literature of Japan,” says Lafcadio Hearn, “prove an æsthetic sensibility developed in directions that yet remain for us almost unexplored? Does not the shrilling booth of the insect-seller at a night-festival proclaim even a popular and universal comprehension of things divined in the West only by our rarest poets: the pleasure-pain of autumn’s beauty, the weird sweetness of the voices of the night, the magical quickening of remembrance by echoes of forest and field? Surely we have something to learn from the people in whose mind the simple chant of a cricket can awaken whole fairy-swarms of tender and delicate fancies. We may boast being their masters in the mechanical, their teachers of the artificial in all its varieties of ugliness; but in the knowledge of the natural—in the feeling of the joy and beauty of earth—they exceed us like the Greeks of old.”<sup>1</sup>

There is another phase of insect life less æsthetic and in every sense less pleasing than the above. Mosquitoes, for example, are neither agreeable nor profitable as companions, though the anopheles does

<sup>1</sup> *Insect Literature*, Tokyo, pp. 386-7.

not trouble us in Japan proper, and much effort has been expended in parts of Formosa to combat this disease-bearing species. I consider such irritating creatures as mosquitoes and fleas a challenge to our civilization, and the extensive presence of the hook-worm in our rice-fields a menace to the functional activities and ability of our people. I have not yet come across an estimate of the precise extent to which national vitality is sapped by such parasites. The lack of such published research is partially responsible for the relative indifference to the problem, which must be faced energetically and scientifically.

The damage done to agricultural crops by insect pests is beyond the intensive practice of our farmers to ward off. It is estimated at £30,000,000—more than 10 per cent. of the value of the various crops. You may despise an insect as “but an insect at most” when it crawls on the head of a queen; but, when swarms of its fellows alight on fields and meadows, they must be taken most seriously, and the prevention of injuries from them forms an important problem of our rural economy.

#### 4. MINERAL RESOURCES

Concerning the mountains, a large number are volcanic, there being no less than 165 volcanoes, of which fifty-four are still active. The great volcanic ranges stretch the entire length of the country. Of these the Kirishima range runs from the tropics in a northeasterly direction, giving rise on its way to Formosa and the Ryukyu archipelago, and joining in the middle of Japan the so-called Fuji zone, which likewise comes up from the tropics, but in a straight northerly course through Guam and Marianne Islands. Besides the two systems named, there runs through the upper regions of Japan another volcanic

chain, known as the Nasu system. Separating again at the southern end of Hokkaido, one part continues straight up north through Saghalien, while the other verges toward the east and is known as the Kurile zone.

Though this is no place to revive the controversy between the Plutonian and the Neptunian theories, nearly one-half of the country belongs geologically to the Cainozoic age, consisting of Tertiary and Quaternary rocks. Igneous rocks, of which granite is the most prominent, are in the ratio of 12 per cent. Of the younger volcanic rocks may be mentioned andesite, basalt and liparite, these forming over 20 per cent. Of the useful metals and minerals, the annual output of which amounts to about £37,500,000, coal is the most important, 31,000,000 metric tons being produced and forming 67 per cent. of the total. The coal seams occurring in Tertiary formations are, however, thin and expensive to work. They are mostly inferior in quality, being bituminous or sub-bituminous. For certain purposes the country imports foreign coal of better quality, though it exports yearly about 2,000,000 or 3,000,000 tons of home produce.

Next to coal comes copper. They are both mined in distantly separated parts of the country. A limited amount of gold and silver is also found. The iron resources are scanty, being limited to some magnetites and hæmatites, although there are valuable sedimentary deposits of bog iron sands in several parts of the country. Lead, antimony and manganese are next in importance. Sulphur mines and sulphur springs are widely spread throughout the country. Building stones of different kinds are being quarried more and more, as means of polishing and transportation are improved.



Petroleum, the consumption of which is increasing rapidly in Japan, is not produced in a sufficient quantity to meet the demand. The domestic production is only about 240,000 tons, which cover about one-quarter of the national requirement, and this exclusive of the naval demands.

The oilfields are found in Hokkaido and on the western coast of the main island. The geology of these fields includes almost always formations of the Tertiary period, in which the oil-bearing strata belong to the Neocene. The distillation of petroleum from coal and shale has been a problem much studied and discussed in this country, and at last it is beginning to give some hope of becoming commercially profitable.

Even at the risk of diverging from our main theme, we may here dwell on the far-reaching consequences of our poverty in metals and minerals.

The more we study human progress, the more are we bewildered by the manifold factors which go to make it up, and the diverse proportions of these factors which impart colouring to it. Quite recently Professor Griffith Taylor of Sydney has demonstrated that coal is one of the fundamental factors, indispensable for the settlement of man in any part of the earth, the other three being elevation, temperature and rainfall. Now comes Mr. Foster Bain,<sup>1</sup> who has explained, with a wealth of illustrations, that the superiority of the present material civilization of the West depends on its rich sources of power—notably of coal, iron and petroleum. According to him, a ton of coal, rationally used, equals 1100 man-days of work, or one man-power equals 2 lb. of coal. China's coal reserves are calculated at 23,435 million tons, capable perhaps of increasing to 50,000 millions by deeper mining. At her present rate of consumption

<sup>1</sup> *Ores and Industry in the Far East.*

this will last China 2000 years, but would hardly supply the needs of the United States for seventy years. If the per capita consumption of the United States were applied, it would last only about sixteen years. As to Japan, her supply is estimated at 8000 million tons (an official estimate gives only 5000 million), sufficient to last Japan for 300 years at the present rate of consumption, but only twenty-five years on the American per capita basis. The high price of Japanese coal—nearly double that of American—is attributed to the distance of mines from industrial centres, heavy freight charges, poor loading facilities and low labour efficiency.<sup>1</sup> Further, Japan has an iron reserve of one and a half tons per capita, a quantity just about enough to cover her needs for two years at the American rate of per capita consumption. Thus both China and Japan are denied by Nature the primary condition of the industrial system, according to Western standards. At present the domestic supply of pig iron is far below one-tenth of the domestic demand. China supplies no mean proportion of our demand. The relation of Japan to the coal mines of China resembles that of the United States to the oil wells of Mexico.

Two grave questions are involved in this problem. One is, how far white coal can replace and fill the predominant place that its black predecessor has occupied. The estimate of the total amount of white coal available in Japan is given at 12,000,000 horse-power, of which not more than a fourth is actually exploited at present. The second question is a more fundamental one. Does the industrial type of civilization offer the most desirable conditions for human development and happiness? Is the acquisi-

<sup>1</sup> Boris P. Torgasheff, *Coal, Iron and Oil in the Far East*, Honolulu, 1929, p. 23.

tive society which is the necessary result of industrialization the perfect organization after which mankind is to strive? Any further inquiry into this question will take us too far afield from our present theme.

#### 5. FORESTS AND WATER SUPPLY

Mountains are naturally the source of lumber and of wood for fuel, both of which are required by the Japanese in a larger proportion than among European peoples, on account of the comparative paucity of coal and building-stones. Careful afforestation is also a matter of prime necessity in a land where the rainfall is very heavy, varying from 23·85 to 120 inches a year, according to locality. The number of rainy days in the year sometimes exceeds 160. As the rivers must be kept under control for purposes of irrigation, forests must be placed under well-ordered regulations.

The forest area, including the wild moors, is naturally very extensive, covering about 56,000,000 acres, or one-half of the entire surface of the country. Due to its moist climate and orological structure, the arboreal flora is varied and abundant, counting over 600 species. Among some 100 species of timber trees there are about thirty valuable for wood. Of bamboos, used for innumerable purposes—some say there are 600 ways of using them—there are more than fifty species, besides numerous garden varieties. Of willows over sixty species have been identified, and of maples many more. The total amount annually felled is roughly 400 to 450 million cubic feet, valued at £20,000,000 to £27,000,000 sterling. Not to be despised are the by-products, such as charcoal, underbrush, resin, mushrooms (worth £700,000), bark, camphor, etc. — yielding altogether some

£16,000,000 to £20,000,000 sterling. Our forests, however, do not by any means adequately satisfy the demands of the nation. While exporting some £1,400,000 worth of railway sleepers, match sticks, logs—hewn and unhewn—to Australia, South Africa and South America, building timber, especially since the earthquake of 1923, has been imported in increasing quantity from North America, charcoal from China, wood for pulp from Asiatic Russia. Since the tariff on timber was summarily reduced in 1920, native-grown wood went down in price to nearly one-third of its former level. The annual import of foreign timber has consequently increased of late, averaging about £10,000,000 in value, which means roughly over 1200 million board feet. There is insistent need of more rational management—alike by the Crown, the State and the private forests.

The total fuel bill of Japan amounts to about £230,000,000 per annum. Of this, more than half represents the cost of charcoal and kindling wood used in private households. As to the consumption of coal, it reaches about 28,000,000 tons a year, valued at £42,000,000. 950,000 tons of the oils consumed cost £7,000,000. Factories of various kinds require kindling woods estimated at £20,000,000. The total cost of 5800 million kilowatts of electric power is valued at £29,000,000. The average consumption of fuel per head of population is estimated at £3 14s. As the high cost of heating is mainly due to the use of wood (charcoal and kindling), the substitution of coal for this will reduce the cost to less than half; but in order to realize such economy the country must have an annual supply of 60,000,000 tons of coal.

We may say that nearly all our dwelling-houses and public edifices, except the new concrete structures,

are built of wood, stone being scantily used. With this frail and combustible material the race has developed an architecture of its own. Very truly says Vidal de la Blanche: "Japan, in particular, with an abundance of evergreens, hinoki, cypress and *Cryptomerias*, well-nigh indestructible because of their resinous content, shares with Greece, although in a very different way, the distinction of being the most striking example of harmonious adjustment between buildings and environment. Half-concealed among the leafy trees surrounding it, the Japanese Shinto temple of cedar is, in its hoary simplicity, as much in keeping with its setting as the rocky promontory of Sunion with the columns which have given it its name."

Owing to the general precipitation and the presence of mountains everywhere, there is no lack of streams and torrents; but, water being badly needed for rice-fields, it is freely drawn from the rivers, making their beds shallower—thus inducing floods in the rainy season, and rendering most rivers unnavigable. Until now, the riparian policy has been of a negative character, mostly concerned with the prevention of floods; but the time is come when it should consider the positive utilization of some 130 rivers that are of sufficient importance in size for transportation. When we are told that the average annual rainfall is about 68 inches—twice the world's average record—it is easy to appreciate the paramount importance of a good riparian policy and administration.

That irrigation, necessitating the common control of water, and compelling the clustering of dwellings on dry ground, instils the habit of communal and collective life, is little to be doubted. But even on mountain slopes cottages agglomerate for security and mutual help. Villages and hamlets are thus normally

typical of our country life. Only in very rare instances are isolated homesteads to be met with.

## 6. RIVERS AND ALLUVIAL PLAINS

A glance at a topographical map of Japan will show how few and small are level plains. Areas with a slope of less than ten degrees cover only about one-fourth of the entire surface of the country. But irregular inclination gives rise to a number of alluvial flats, which in turn give rise to populous settlements. The largest river in the main island is the Tone, 200 miles in length, with a drainage basin of 6000 square miles, containing eighty towns and cities—among them Tokyo and Yokohama—and supporting altogether a population of 10,000,000. The Nobi plain, deposited by the Kiso (150 miles long) and its tributaries, is 3500 square miles in extent, and is the most prosperous part of Japan, with nearly 3,000,000 inhabitants. Nagoya is its centre. The three cities of Osaka, Kyoto and Kobe, with their innumerable adjunctive towns and villages, inhabited by about 5,000,000 souls, lie in the Kinai plain, traversed by the Yodo and smaller rivers. The best silk-producing province, Shinano, is watered by the river that bears the same name—250 miles long and draining an area of 2400 square miles. It is the largest potential producer of power, with 850,000 h.p. at normal flow. As it approaches its mouth on the Sea of Japan, it enables the fertile plain of Echigo to produce its famous rice. These numerous rivers have each laid down respectable alluvial deposits, fit for human habitation and industry. Scattered here and there throughout the country are level uplands, some of considerable height and size, lying above potamic influences. Such regions have been tried for pasturage—alas ! thus far with too little success. Of

some 7,000,000 acres of arable land, about 20 per cent. is still insufficiently irrigated. However, one may be assured that scientific research will show exactly what is technically called "the mineral contents of natural pastures," and will pave the way for their final utilization. The Government has under consideration the colonization of these waste places by granting aid. They are by no means all too poor to be profitably cultivated, if only water be supplied and access to market improved. Railways and hydraulic engineering promise an increase of available land in the near future. The same end is being achieved by drainage. Lakes and swamps have lately been drained, and, in a few places, thousands of acres have been gained from the sea by artificially directing and aiding the natural deposit of silt and sand at the mouths of some rivers. It is confidently asserted by agronomical experts that over 5,000,000 acres can still be won for tillage in Japan proper. Of these 1,400,000 acres can be reclaimed by irrigation, which, if effected by electricity, would require 200,000 kw. Already thousands of small electric motors are being employed for this purpose. We shall consider the agricultural possibilities of the country more fully in another chapter.

#### 7. EARTHQUAKES AND THEIR EFFECTS

We have been dwelling on the economic aspects of the various geographical features of the country. We must not omit altogether its un-economic characteristics and the calamities which ensue from these. Foremost among them stands, of course, the seismological cause. Enough emphasis has been placed on the location of the islands along volcanic lines. These form a series of semicircular arcs with their convex portions turned towards the Pacific. The convex side naturally bears more tension than the concave, or

compressing side. The result is that so-called outer Japan, facing east and south, has been the scene of repeated seismological disturbances ever since our history began. Even the sudden emergence of Mt. Fuji from the bottom of the sea is assigned an historical date. There seem to have been periods in which earthquakes and eruptions and tidal waves have occurred in quick succession, followed by a time of comparative calm. The last few years evidently belong to such an actively recurrent period. Including slight shakes felt only by the seismograph, the frequency of earthquakes in different parts of the country averages about 1500 a year, or about four a day. In the four years that have elapsed since the great earthquake of September 1, 1923, the earth has trembled under our feet no less than 22,000 times—that is, about seventeen times a day.

The catastrophic disaster of 1923 is explained by the probable strain exerted for a long period on the earth crust between the Kwanto district and the adjacent Bay of Sagami, respectively the most elevated and the most depressed portions in this region.

The above disaster caused a loss of property estimated variously from £150,000,000 to £3,270,000,000 sterling (probably some £550,000,000) and of 91,300 lives, besides 66,000 injured or missing. The number of sufferers totalled over 3,400,000. It deserves to be mentioned that the flat down-town section of Tokyo suffered most, while the hilly diluvial district felt the shock in a decidedly less degree. The enormous amount of damage done was chiefly due to the conflagrations which followed, and not directly to the earthquake.

The greatest lesson taught by the recent catastrophe was that buildings of reinforced concrete best resist these earth-movements, and a new era is consequently



beginning in Japanese architecture. Recent accurate observations have confirmed the age-long popular belief that, were it not for the fires which ensue, wooden houses withstand the shocks better than stone or brick structures. Very truly has Gibbon said that "in these disasters the architect becomes the enemy of mankind." It is a remarkable fact that the tall five-storied pagoda has never been upset by a seismic disturbance. This is due to its construction being based on the principle of the wooden instrument known as the duplex pendulum seismograph. It consists of an inverted pendulum, which in the case of the pagoda is the outer frame of the tower, and an inner pendulum, the equivalent of which in the pagoda is the central suspended column, which does not touch the ground. Another contribution of the earthquake to Japanese architecture is the confirmation of the value of the curvature of the retaining wall in dry masonry, seen in nearly all well-kept castle buildings. The curve forms a parabola—a form which equalizes, as it were, the shock on the different sections. A wall of a parabolic form escapes the danger of being weak at the base, and so reduces to a minimum the effect of the marginal vibration which may induce the formation of cracks along the upper edge.

Of the moral effect of earthquakes in general, nothing positive can be affirmed with any show of scientific accuracy. Is it because of the natural buoyancy of the race or because of a philosophical fatalism that so few superstitions are connected with this most terrible of terrestrial occurrences? No Poseidon or Neptune has his prototype in this tremulous land. More Hebraic than Hellenic in this respect, the Japanese are aware that "the Lord is not in the earthquake." Popular myth attributes these earth spasms to the wriggling of a huge catfish,

living underground. But nobody thinks of fearing or worshipping this creature. It is treated as an object at which to poke fun.

Immediately after the adversity of 1923, during which those who suffered did, generally speaking, rise to a moral height, religious and scientific bodies made an *enquête* as to its psychological effects. It seems to have affected different temperaments differently, making the good better and the bad worse. I am not, I hope, very far from the mark when I venture to say that the first effect of a great upheaval is mainly emotional, and brings to the surface the best that is in man; but, after the momentary excitement and adventures are passed, man begins to doubt whether it is worth while to exert or sacrifice himself. Desperation argues for eating and drinking, "for tomorrow we shall die." We know under what circumstances the *Decameron* was written. The Japanese temperament resembles the Italian.

#### 8. POLITICAL AND INTERNATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF JAPAN'S GEOGRAPHY

A word on the political significance of our geography. Whether there is such a thing as a political boundary of a State has long been contested. A territory is what a State makes it. There is no natural territory, any more than there is a natural size of an estate. The ability to govern decides the frontiers of a country. The Empire of Japan started as a small State in the south of Japan, gradually expanding north-eastward. When it was a small tribal community in Kyūshū, Russia was no menace. With each stage of extension new hypothetical enemies appeared on the horizon. For centuries Japan maintained her territory intact, and was in no fear of attack until Korea fell into the hands of China

and, later, of Russia. Few metaphors better suggest truth than that hostile Korea, backed by a militant power, would be a dagger pointed at the heart of Japan. The "inviolable sea" is no longer an accurate term, whether it be applied to the waters that have so long protected Britain or Japan; for neither sea nor land erects a barrier to the greed and lust of man. Neither the Straits of Korea nor the Sea of Japan affords security to Japan, any more than do the Dover Straits or the North Sea to England. To an English reader, to whom a revolutionary France or an impotent Belgium must seem an immediate danger, the anxiety that the Japanese feels about an unstable China or an enslaved Korea must be more than evident.

From the propinquity of Japan to the continent, it is easy to infer that she possesses special interest in the political stability of China—particularly of Manchuria—and in the economic development of Siberia. The mere fact that £180,000,000 of Japanese capital is invested in China is proof of this. This interest is far more vital than that which makes America proclaim her "Monroe Doctrine." The difference lies, however, in this: that whereas this doctrine redounds only to the benefit of America, and to the chagrin and humiliation of the South American states, the development of China and Siberia is subject-matter affecting not only Japan, but also the peace of the Far East, and ultimately the peace of the whole world. The repeated attempts made by Japan to enable China to secure a firm government have been awkward—and not infrequently urged from a mistaken motive. They have presented ample cause for resentment from China and for just criticism, both at home and abroad. But how much more reasonable and

justifiable they have been, compared with what America has of late been doing in the Spanish Main, in the name of the Monroe Doctrine, only impartial history will judge.

Regarding Siberia, Japan's relations with her are less immediate than, and of a different character from, those with China. Since the world's great highway passes through it—at least until a similar route may be established farther south through China or via India—it is highly desirable that this way should be kept open for uninterrupted traffic with Europe, and our policy with Russia must be conducted on a different basis from that of other countries. Furthermore, considering the thousands of our fishermen engaged in the Siberian waters and the millions of our people depending upon food harvested there, the need for peaceful relations with Russia is too obvious for further remark.

In these days of high speed and aviation, territorial adjacency has lost its former importance, or the term must at least be designated by longer units than ever before. Japan, occupying a strategic position in the economy of the Pacific Ocean, is connected more or less directly with all the states bordering this great body of water. Herein lies the fundamental principle of the Japanese navy. It is becoming more and more true that seas do not divide, but unite, countries. Pan-pacificism is a new phase and doctrine in the political and economic consciousness of mankind.

Admiral Ballard, in writing on the influence of the sea on the political history of Japan, has divided this into four periods<sup>1</sup>: (1) of compulsory isolation, when the sea proved a safeguard and a protection; (2) of artificial and voluntary isolation, these two periods lasting altogether fifteen centuries; (3) of probation,

<sup>1</sup> *The Influence of the Sea on the Political History of Japan*, chap. i.

covering only four decades, beginning with the Meiji era ; and (4) of naval expansion, by which is meant the present. When we consider in the next chapters the history of the country, we shall see illustrations of his statements and the reasons for them. Concerning the profit and loss balance of the long age of isolation, no definite account can be rendered historically. The decision can be but a matter of opinion. The fact remains that, in defiance of the barriers imposed by geography, the race maintained a hospitable attitude to exotic influences, and only during the abnormal second period was xenelasia enforced as a policy. The quick perception of whatever is intrinsically excellent in an object or idea, whencesoever it may emanate, and the ready acquiescence in or adoption of it, have characterized the nation in spite of adverse conditions. The world must have found this to be true by the ready consent the country gives to all proposals of universal interest. Not in blind submission, but with an open mind and discerning eye, does it comply with the most advanced ideas and co-operate with the most advanced nations of the world. This wisdom is the heritage of the race, and has been fostered in later days by maritime surroundings.

To extend the land sovereignty over the seas has been the dream of ambitious races. One after another, the Phœnicians, the Athenians, the Carthaginians, strove to found an Empire on the waves ; so did Venice, Spain, Portugal and, more recently, England and Germany. But "Oceana" has proved to be no more than a metonymy of Harrington and Froude. It seems ordained by Nature that man cannot claim the exclusive right of dominion—much less of possession—over any element upon which he has not bestowed his labour. The sea will remain free

until man can still the billows and command the tides to rise or fall at his behest. The earth becomes his by tilling it in the sweat of his brow. What has he done in the domain of water? Absolutely nothing to enrich or beautify it. It is a condition, and not a mere instrument of his existence. "The freedom of the seas" has a wider significance than in the narrow technical sense of international law. Thalassocracy is the most iniquitous form of megalomania.

The so-called Pan-Pacific problems are mainly confined to the northern area. As far as Japan is concerned, Australia and New Zealand do not bother her in the least. Our people do not know much about them, except as countries where sheep are sheared and meat is frozen. The North Pacific area engrosses, however, the attention of the Japanese. Speaking of this portion of the earth, Professor W. E. Ritter of the University of California called it a "unit area of populational distribution as much as of physical geography." According to him, in this region some 500,000,000 Asiatics are brought into ever closer contact with some 6,000,000 Americans. The great gap that exists in the standard of living between the two groups has somehow to be bridged, or else catastrophe will befall the human race. The instincts of preservation and of self-realization on both sides impel the one to cross the ocean and the other to bar them out. How the issues will end is a world problem of the first magnitude. It is a problem to which no amount of legislation or political manœuvring, whether in the emigrant or the immigrant country, will give final solution; for it transcends the idea of nationality. It is pre-eminently a humanitarian issue, and, unless man rises above national egotism or realizes that each nation's ultimate good lies in harmonious co-operation with the rest of man-

kind, no satisfactory solution will be forthcoming. Perhaps it is to such consummation that Professor Ritter looked when he expressed the hope of seeing the solution transferred from the domain of human passion to the domain of human reason. It is chiefly to science and scientific methods that we pin our hope. It is not inconceivable that science may devise methods of rationally developing the resources and of equitably distributing the fruits of the whole area among all the populations living within its boundaries. In the meantime, as a preliminary step towards so high a goal, the Powers surrounding the Pacific Ocean must get rid of that mentality expressed in the oft-repeated slogan—the Mastery of, or Supremacy on, the Pacific. Happily, this is becoming more and more obsolete. The alignment of Japan with the Teutonic sea-powers, as against the Slavonic land-power, which Captain Mahan regarded as “more than momentary,” will be realized not on the ground of united defence, but on the higher plane of common ideas and common ideals; for the hopes he entertained of the maritime interests of the “sea-powers” have lately been severely shattered by mutual rivalry and suspicion. Combined menace from any two of them would probably throw the third into the arms of other opponents, from sheer necessity of self-preservation. We have still to learn that no one nation can rule the Pacific, which is more than large enough to swallow up all the navies of the world. Naval disarmament is not a technical subject to be decided by experts. Only far-seeing statesmen and men with vision can answer the manifold questions which now and then disturb the placid surface of the ocean.

Those who talk of this great ocean in terms of sheer nationalism have no idea of its magnitude or importance. The various sectors of the Asiatic side of the

basin contain an area of 7,500,000 square miles; those of the American side nearly 3,000,000 square miles—altogether 10,000,000 square miles, which is over one-fifth of the land surface of the earth. This area is teeming with one-third of the combined population of our planet—540,000,000, plus 23,000,000 on the Asiatic and American sides respectively.

Not by the apportioning of its waters, but by sharing its resources; not by measuring its value in terms of power, but in those of service; not by the spirit of antagonism, but in that of friendship, will the Pacific Ocean be made to subserve its world-wide purposes.



## CHAPTER II

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

"The sole terms on which the past can become ours are its subordination to the present."—EMERSON.

#### I. THE DAWN OF HISTORY

JAPANESE history opens with the mention of three deities, all bearing anagogical names referring to their sustaining and creative power. The foremost among them is called the Lord-God-of-the-Heavenly-Centre. The instant the striking name is mentioned, he disappears from our mythology, leaving our pantheon without a Zeus or an Odin. This primordial triad is followed by a numerous retinue of gods and culture heroes. The first portion of the *Kojiki*, "Records of Ancient Matters," compiled in A.D. 712 from the oral traditions handed down in the guild of reciters, is taken up with the lists of deities who gave birth to more deities for a succession of uncounted periods. Though their names are barely mentioned, and nothing of their deeds, further study may one day reveal the significance of these names, as their descriptive character suggests something more than mere nomenclature. Japanese historiography is not wanting in euphemerists, but their efforts have not yet drawn the dingy forms of deities out of their crepuscular abode.

In reading the list of deities, our attention pauses over the story of Izanagi and Izanami (usually believed to signify the Attractor and the Attractrice),

to whom is attributed the feat of creating, or, more literally, of "procreating" the islands and the ancestors of the ruling dynasty of Japan; for it was from them that the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu or Tensho Daijin, descended, who is alleged to be the primal ancestress of the ruling dynasty of Japan. An interesting work awaits the archæologist—to find out whence the story of the Sun Goddess originated and whether the locality of her residence can be identified. How much of the story is a mere myth or has an historic foundation to rest upon, is still an open question. Only very lately has a somewhat serious attempt been made to show that her existence was no myth; but the proofs adduced are still far from convincing. The name of her residence, *Taka-ama-hara*, the "High Plain of Heaven," is even more mystifying than the location of Eden. Different localities in the country and in adjacent lands, as well as in the far-off regions of Sumeria, or Akkad, have been advanced as the spot where this personage held her court, but as yet the place and all its inhabitants are wrapped in haze.

It is not safe for us to wander into those maze-like regions; or, if we do, our venture will be more fruitful under the guidance of a mythologist than of a historian. Safer will it be for us to start our narrative with a more terrestrial age—that of the founder of the Empire.

The chronology of Jimmu-Tennô (let it be explained once for all that *Tennô* means Emperor, equivalent to *Mikado*, which literally meant the Honourable Gate—*i.e.* the gate to the palace of the *Sumera-Mikoto*, the ancient title of the sovereign) is still a matter of scientific controversy. The date officially assigned to his ascension to the throne is 660 B.C.

It seems quite probable that the Japanese historiographers, in adopting the Chinese method of chronological computation, erred advertently or inadvertently by some sexagenary periods, thus adding 600 years to the first seventeen reigns.

This is indicated by the extraordinary longevity of our early rulers down to the seventeenth emperor. Their average age is given as 109 years. Moreover, their long reigns are mere blanks as far as events are concerned. An explanation of these abnormally lengthy reigns is found in a statement made in an ancient Chinese book, to the effect that the Japanese counted a period from one equinox to another as one year. This reduces the long life by one half. While this explanation is simple, natural and reasonable, the reduction of 600 years by one half does not bring Japanese events into conformity with continental records. Perhaps another and a far more complicated idea may have been in the mind of the first astrologers, who were bent on making Japanese history begin on as auspicious and as early a date as possible.

It was at the beginning of the seventh century that the knowledge of making calendars was introduced into Japan; but it took ninety years more before the first official one was promulgated. The calendrical system of China was based on the so-called sexagenary cycle of sixty years, formed by multiplying a series of ten elements (wood, fire, earth, metal and water, each with its senior and junior) by twelve signs of the zodiac—making 120 years, half of which constitute the cycle named above. It is said that this system had been in use in China ever since the twenty-seventh century B.C. As everywhere else, so in China, there were lucky and unlucky days as well as years, and the year

where the two signs *shin* (metal junior) and *yu* (cock) were in conjunction, was believed to mark a new era, rich in high enterprise. Such a combination occurs every sixty years, and the coronation of the first Emperor was probably put forward, with due allowance for intervening reigns, to fit into this particularly auspicious combination.

Whatever the explanation, scientific historians are generally agreed that the date when Japan came into existence as an independent and united kingdom must have been about the beginning of the Christian era—perhaps as early as 130 years B.C.

We bring, then, the commencement of our history down to 60 B.C., and some historians even look upon this date as too early by several decades.

Jimmu-Tennō's lineage is traced to the grandson of the Sun Goddess, whom she sent to Japan to conquer and subdue it. His family appears in history as first rising into prominence in Kyūshū, and as proceeding eastward in its victorious march, though not much farther than the present site of Kyoto.

The tribes whom he brought into subjection bear many appellations suggestive of their characteristics—Earth-spiders, Long-shanks, etc. Whether they themselves were autochthonous we know not. Not unlikely they were of different races, settled in groups along the coast and river-courses, and in constant warfare with each other. They seem to have been in a neolithic stage, some perhaps just beginning to use metal—iron and copper-ware evidently being supplied from the continent. They must have subsisted chiefly by hunting and fishing, though they were acquainted with agriculture, perhaps terrace-farming and irrigation. According to an old Chinese record—one of the very first writings to mention Japan—there were, in the third century

before Christ, about one hundred kingdoms in the islands, and of these about thirty paid tribute to the Chinese ruler of the Yen dynasty. These groups could well have been offshoots of the Chinese race—or, even if they were not, it is not improbable that the Emperor of China, whose sway extended at that time to Korea, would have claimed the allegiance of the scattered and semi-independent insular tribes. It is still usual for Japanese historians to deny the probability of such a fact, without giving a counter reason. No English historian will deem it an indignity to his country to own that it was once under Danish rule or that it paid Danegeld to obtain freedom—and this more than a century after Egbert and Alfred.

If the tribes whom Jimmu-Tennô united under his rule were the Tungus, Ainu, and what not, of what race were the conquerors? Here again we stumble upon a still unexplored field.

The suggestion has been made that they were Malays from the south. Whatever their blood, they must have been a well-trained band of seafaring warriors, for without much mishap they made their way both by land and sea, and in eight years they seem to have practically subjugated the southern half of Japan. Though the account of Jimmu's expeditions is couched here and there in fabulous terms, there is no serious difficulty in accepting the authenticity of the main events of his career. Far more obscure are the careers of his successors for several generations. He himself is accredited with a long life of over a hundred years, but is surpassed in decades by many of the later sovereigns whose uneventful reigns, nevertheless, look like a blank sheet of paper.

It is not until we come to the tenth ruler, Sujin

Tenno (officially 97-30 B.C.) that we find ourselves treading upon more solid, or at least less uncertain ground. In fact, after his death he was surnamed the "First Ruler," confirming the hypothesis that the preceding reigns had been devoid of importance, except perhaps for genealogical purposes. From the meagre record we learn that he was the first sovereign who differentiated the temporal from the spiritual functions of the State and who inaugurated a uniform system of taxation—"tribute on men's arrow-notches and women's finger-tips," as was the archaic expression for the produce of the chase and of domestic handiwork. According to official chronology, his reign begins in 97 B.C. and ends in 30 B.C., when he dies at the age of 119 years, or of 168 years according to another account. I mention his age merely to add that incredible longevity continues to be allotted to his seven successive followers, and then rather suddenly, from about 400 of the Christian era, the emperors cease to be as long-lived as their predecessors. The thick veil of legendary lore simply gets thinner and thinner with the progress of writing, and is well-nigh gone by the seventh century.

Japanese history will profit much by having its dates compared without prejudice with, and scientifically verified by, corresponding statements made in Chinese and Korean annals. Just as ancient Hebrew chronology is considered unreliable until it is compared with the Assyrian records of the age corresponding to the reign of King Ahab, so may the dates of Japanese events prior to the introduction of writing be reasonably established only in the light of Chinese and Korean documents. There was a time when national pride would not tolerate any reflection made on the genuineness and authen-

ticity of every single item mentioned in our two oldest annalistic sources—the *Kojiki* and the *Nihongi* (“Chronicles of Japan,” edited in A.D. 720). But such a “fundamentalistic” conception of a nation’s history is a confession of its own weakness, the proof of a lurking fear lest its statements may ill brook the onslaught of higher criticism.

Archæological findings may also alter the various dates acknowledged at present as uncontroversial. Already serious doubts exist in connection with the eastward march of the first Emperor. The earliest archæological remains thus far discovered in Kyûshû are bronze swords and spears of Chinese make of the first Christian century—whereas the oldest found in the central (Kyôto) district are iron weapons, which cannot be traced to a period earlier than the middle of the third (Christian) century. Whether the Western (Kyûshû) and the Eastern (Yamato) culture were of different origin, or whether the Western tribe learned the use of iron during its progress eastward, is an open question.

As late as the third century, the frontier of Japan lay about the 138th degree longitude (Greenwich)—that is, just about the middle of present Japan. Along this line were fought some of the hardest battles between the Yamato race and the Ainu. In these battles the party possessing weapons of iron won the day, and steadily pressed on; so that towards the end of the eighth century the frontier had been pushed forward, until only one-fourth of the country was left to the domination of the Ainu. Their final expulsion from the mainland to the northern island (Hokkaidô) did not take place until two centuries later.

The south-western part of Kyûshû was for a long time in the hands of the Kumaso, and beyond, not

far from the original home of Jimmu-Tennô, in the present province of Satsuma, there was the recalcitrant tribe of the Haito, which was not subjugated until the end of the seventh century. Who these tribes were we cannot yet tell with any degree of certainty. Probably they were Malayan.

The Ainu, who are identified by many ethnologists as Aryan, had once occupied almost the whole of Japan; but at the dawn of our authentic history we find them already receding northward. That they had long occupied the whole country is attested by the local names they left behind.

## 2. EARLIEST FORMS OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

At the time authentic history opens, the "march" or the borderland of "Japan" lay across the country round about Lake Biwa, where a straight line from sea to sea measures only sixty miles. This is the region of the Japanese Alps. Only at the end of the eighth century was the frontier pushed as far as 38° north latitude. The conquest and settlement of the islands were the slow work of centuries.

As the territory of the race extended, its social structure underwent transformation of various kinds. In the beginning this was simple in conception, evidently based on consanguinity as the guiding principle. Not unlikely matriarchy was a still earlier practice, though in historic times it had given way to the patriarchal form—without altogether excluding women from a place of power and dignity.

The social unit was the family or clan, *uji* (gens), consisting of the lateral and collateral descendants of a common ancestor. They were bound to each other by the worship of their common forbear, *ujikami* (lares and penates). Each clan had a cult (*sacra gentilitia*) of its own. At the head of the *uji*



was the chief, the patriarch, *uji-no-osa*—though not necessarily the oldest person in age, yet recognized as the legitimate paterfamilias by the rest of the family. English sociology will easily recognize a resemblance between the *uji-no-osa* and ætheling or eorl, and between *uji-bito* and freelings or ceorls. Associated with the family were the *be* or *tomo* (companion, comitatus, gesith, fideles?). They might not be closely related in blood, but nevertheless formed a part of the *uji* household in a subsidiary and probably subservient capacity. They were only half-free, and may perhaps be best compared with the villeins of later English history. Below the *tomo* there was another class of partially-free men (freed-men?), the *yakehito*, literally house-men (the old German Hausgenossen or Hauslinge), who could not be bought or sold like chattels. Then, at the bottom of the social ladder, was the *yakko* (the slave, the læt). Sometimes a whole village (*mura*) or group of villages consisted of one family who followed the same profession. The clan formed a craft-guild. Its members did not live in one house, or in the same locality. As a rule the immediately related ones shared the homestead (*ko*), the æthel, in which and for which the slaves and the villeins did the hardest labour. One is not very far off the mark in saying that if the *uji* was the social unit, the *ko* was the economic.

Whether the clan formed a village community, husbanding the common land, is not clear. Both the *uji* and the *tomo* men bore the family names (cognomen, patronymic), but the *yakko* had only their personal names (prænomen). Later on, just as in English history, the order of thanehood (thegn or military gesith, later territorial lord), grew to supplement the nobility based on purity of blood,

so the institution of *kabane*, the titular order, appeared very early in our history. *Kabane* was a caste, not very rigid, of persons on whom a title was bestowed by the Crown for merit of some sort. They turned the honour into a proper name (agnomen).

The etymology of the term *uji* has been much mooted; but it has been popularly accepted as being derived from *uchi* (interior, house, within). Quite recently an ingenious theory has been advanced by Archdeacon Batchelor, according to whom *uji* was originally an Ainu term meaning fire, and more specifically fire on the domestic hearth. He thus connects it with the Sun-worship of the race.

I have dwelt with some care on these various classes, as they played an important part in the early society of Japan. Blood-bond, exclusively, was at first the certificate to a public office. Later, those who possessed talents were recognized; but they, too, had to be titled in order to occupy positions of distinction. On the talented, therefore, titles were bestowed. Almost the opening pages of our history give a glimpse of rival clans (*uji*) struggling for political supremacy.

### 3. INTRODUCTION OF CONTINENTAL CULTURE

Of infinite significance is the influence of Chinese culture on Japan in the days of her incipient nationality. Already in neolithic times there must have been a good deal of communication between the Japanese archipelago, particularly the southern islands, and the continent. When our ancestors were just emerging from the Bronze Age, and had no other seafaring craft than frail dug-outs, the argosies of China cruised along the shores of Japan and supplied its savage inhabitants with articles of

industry, while in later ages the defeated generals and political adventurers of the Middle Kingdom may have resorted thither for shelter. We can well believe that there were Chinese settlements scattered along the western coast. It is not impossible that some local chiefs in the west and south of Japan placed themselves under the protection of the more powerful and advanced Chinese rule.

About the Christian era, at a time when our history was still shrouded in obscurity, China was glorying in the accomplishments of the Han Period (206 B.C. to A.D. 220). It was only natural that continental culture should come into Japan by way of Korea. It is not too much to say that this peninsula played the rôle in the development of Oriental civilization that Crete did in that of the Occident. One can surmise the affinity, racial and linguistic, between the Koreans and the Japanese, either as the cause or as an effect of the frequent prehistoric intercourse between them. Were not the Koreans land Japanese, and the Japanese maritime Koreans? We understand why some Chinese writers have entertained the idea that Japan was in her earliest days a colony of China. It has even been pointed out that as far back as the third century B.C., when the Chinese tyrant Huang Ti sent an expedition in search of the herbs that would render him immortal, "the Isles of the East" were its destination, and the party of youths and maidens dispatched on the mission settled there instead of returning home to expose themselves to the wrath of their exacting master.

Chinese works of the Han period make mention of Yamato as a small kingdom in the island of Kyûshû, and of Jihpen (Japan) as another state. Even if Jimmu-Tennô's conquests united these little

states under his rule, they may well have given an impression of complete independence by the large degree of autonomy which they afterwards enjoyed, due to a weak central authority, wherever that may have been.

These apparently, or really, autonomous states on the south-western coasts nearest to Korea may well have come under strong continental influence, and it was probably to check this undue influence that an expedition was planned late in the fourth century (middle of the third, according to official chronology) by the Empress Jingû. The southern part of Korea passed under Japanese rule; but peace never continued for any length of time, and Japan's hold on the peninsula was tightened or loosened according as her resources in man-power and money at home varied. If her political claims were precarious, her cultural debt to Korea was incalculably great and continued to increase.

Following Empress Jingû's expedition, our communication with that peninsula became more frequent, and precious commodities were brought to the Japanese Court by Korean emissaries. A stallion is mentioned among the tribute. This was an invaluable contribution, for the horse is not native to our country. Brewing and weaving and other useful arts were transplanted about this time. Thousands of Koreans and Chinese settled in various parts of the Empire. Of particular significance was the official employment of foreign tutors for the Emperor's sons. The study of letters did not remain a monopoly of the palace, but soon spread among the nobility—no doubt facilitated by the arrival of private teachers from over the sea. So keenly was the practical use of writing appreciated, that instruction in Chinese ideograms was encouraged

by the Government and schools were founded for this purpose. The first instructors were, of course, Koreans or Chinese, and in their instruction they naturally made known the moral code of Confucius and the political institutions of the T'ang dynasty, then ruling in the Celestial Empire.

While reverence for the ethical ideas of China was widespread and unalloyed, and their dissemination unopposed, the introduction of Buddhism, also by way of Korea and China, invited no small hostility. Though official annals give the date A.D. 552 as the year in which a Korean king presented a Buddhist statue and some scriptures to Kimmei-tennô, it is fairly certain that converts to that confession, too humble to be named, had previously been made in the country. The formal acceptance of the presents above alluded to perhaps only marks a public recognition of the faith, and not a decided step taken in its favour by the Court. When the Korean king's proselyting letter was brought before the Emperor's council for discussion, opinions were sharply divided. These were mainly animated by political reasons and family interests, and a fierce conflict ensued between two leading *uji*—the Soga espousing the Buddhist faith on the ground of its universality and blessings, and the Mononobé stigmatizing it as an alien tenet in no way superior to the native trust in *Kami*. The Tennô, after listening to both sides of the argument, gave the image of Buddha to the defender of the new faith, saying, "Keep it for yourself; but let others keep their old faith." This simple but clear-cut enunciation of religious liberty was never diverged from throughout the history of religious movements in Japan, until the coming of the Christian friars.

The conflict between the two faiths ended in an intellectual compromise—so often resorted to in Japan on like occasions—that this exotic faith was fundamentally identical with the teachings of Shintô, the native religion identified by some scholars with Shamanism. The great reconciler was the Prince Regent Shôtoku, to whom the country owes much for its elevation from the status of semi-barbarism to that of culture. Himself a devout Buddhist, an ardent patriot and a thorough Chinese scholar, he announced the following principle: "Shinto is the source and root of the Way, and, shot up with the sky and the earth, teaches man the primal way; Classicism (Confucianism) is the branch and foliage of the Way, and, bursting forth with man, it teaches him the middle Way; Buddhism is the flower and fruit of the Way, and, appearing after man's mental powers matured, teaches him the final Way. Hence, to love one in preference to another only shows man's selfish passion." He was the Constantine and the Asoka of Japan. Buddhism flourished under his high patronage, and continued to flourish under his successors for several generations.

#### 4. NATIONAL INTEGRATION

Prince Shôtoku was great as a builder of state, as a patron of art and as an advocate of continental culture—a patriot by reason of his internationalism and an internationalist by reason of his patriotism. By opening wide the gates of his country to the full and steady inflow of Chinese ideas and sciences, of Hindu religion and literature, of Korean arts and crafts, and by indicating the general lines for the formation of a unified government, he made fast the principle of monarchism for his country.

It is to him, too, that Japan owes the first attempt

at what might roughly be called the "Principles" (*Kempô*) of government, or the laws to be followed in the governance of the State. Consisting of seventeen articles, these Principles were published at the very beginning of the seventh century. Most of the articles are didactic in character, warning officials against partiality, bribery, indolence, insolence, abuse of power, etc. Of special interest to us are the first article, which declares that the end of government is to secure peace, and the fifteenth, which provides that, in matters of grave moment, officials should "consult the many." What does "the many" imply? The small number of the officials' colleagues? A body of councillors? A parliament, the demos? In ambiguity lies wisdom—in ancient as in modern political manifestos; for each age must interpret general truths in the light of its own experience and according to its special needs.

Between the lines of what read like precepts to civilians it is not difficult to discover in the "Principles" the real motive of its author. It was to ensure the authority of the Crown by eliminating rivalry for the throne. The house of Jimmu-Tennô had grown large by this time, and some of its branches—lords of *uji* and heritors of *Kabane*—were powerful enough to set up an independent court. The unification of the reigning family was the preliminary condition for the peace of the country, and the allegiance of its public servants must be undivided. Where could one look for legitimacy in government? In the twelfth article of the instrument it was definitely stated that the country owns no two lords, that the people serve no two masters, and the whole land and the entire population own a single Tennô as the only master.

Shôtoku made use of the highly centralized system of the T'ang administration to meet the pressing need of his age and country. The elaborate codes of laws issued half a century later may be viewed as a further elaboration of his "Principles."

The significance of this saintly statesman cannot be over-estimated. The strangely humble epithet, Uma-yado-no-ôji ("The Prince of the Stable"), which he bore has led some writers to compare his life with that of Jesus. Of studious and pious turn of mind, he nevertheless came out of the closet as a political reformer. He had three lights to guide him. Buddha taught him human equality, which denied social discrimination of any sort. Confucius taught him the power and the right of the great man. His observation and experience of native events taught him the influence of aristocracy as well as the dangers of oligarchy. If he had followed the first, he would have sown the seed of republicanism and of social discord. Had he followed the second, he would have weakened the Crown by alienating the support of the leading families. If he had followed only the trend of his country's examples, he would have seen the disruption of the nation among the *uji* aristocrats.

In this dilemma he was not blinded by the theory, however enlightened, of the equality of man, nor by the glaring fact of the existence of the nobility. Boldly and clearly he came out in favour of the rule by a single recognized royal family, to the exclusion of others, be they never so illustrious. This dealt a fatal blow not only to the chiefs of the prominent *uji*, but also to all *uji* as an institution. Henceforth they were not to monopolize State functions. These were to be filled by men qualified by ability, and not merely by blood relation.



The reforms initiated by Shôtoku were carried further by subsequent legislation.

Of all the feats of importation which marked this epoch, the most astounding was the wholesale adoption of Chinese laws. First issued in the year period Taika (645-9), the code bears its name, and was supplemented from time to time by other sets of laws, until they were practically complete by the year period called Taihō (701-3). The fact that the first draft was made by a man who had spent thirty years in China, tells the tale. From the very beginning of their publication there was more or less opposition, largely because they were so thickly tinged with exoticism; and no small difficulty was encountered in their execution. It was not the codification of the customary laws. If it had been, it would have been meaningless to apply Chinese terms to the usages of the land. To give a name is to limit the conception of the thing named, and Chinese names when applied to native usages narrowed their significance or altered their meaning. The new legislation was far more uncongenial to the Japanese temper than were the legal enactments of St. Louis and his successors to the English. No wonder the codes remained a dead letter and the parts that were actually executed did not enjoy long life.

If thus they proved a failure as statutes, they established the fundamental principle of a monarchy and of the monarch as the supreme head of the State, the only legitimate lord over men and land. They carried a step farther the doctrine advanced by Prince Shôtoku. The framers of the codes were not mere imitators of the T'ang laws. They were not guided by dreamy idealism only, but were evidently moved by a reforming spirit against the

real abuses of the age. This is obvious from the laws referring to the equal distribution of land. There had been a growing and grievous tendency for the great to enclose public domains and to reduce their occupants to serfdom. The Taihō Code laid down the principle that all land and people belonged primarily to the sovereign, and that, therefore, he would provide all his subjects with land sufficient for their support. For this purpose every male above the age of six was to be given a rice-field, two *tan* (half an acre) in extent, and every female an area one-third less. It was further provided that distribution was to be renewed every six years. This interesting socialistic scheme, also borrowed from China, was actually carried out in several parts of the country—as still existing traces of it testify; but the periodical assessment was at first made only irregularly, and by the middle of the tenth century, entirely neglected. There was a loophole in the laws which made private ownership possible, and, though such was allowed only for a limited period, the neglect of assessment resulted in the gradual transformation of ownership to property—small acres to latifundia, free peasants to slaves.

As to other provisions of the Taika and Taihō laws, whether those relating to personal status or family concerns, they were either too foreign or too advanced for the nation at large, and set a standard for the nobility only. The most influential of the royal princes led the way in subscribing to the spirit of the new laws. Of their own accord they surrendered all their land and slaves to the central authority—an act called anew to mind a thousand years later, as we shall see.

With the decay of the *uji* regime, the half-free

*tomo* and *yake-hito* members of the tribe were raised to the status of free men, and finally the emancipation of the *yakko* was accomplished, so that, by the end of the eighth century, slaves became a sort of *bordar* or *cottar*. One notices in these changes the usual process of social evolution whereby economic development gradually weakens the personal dependence of the poor on the rich, freeing the former from the legal shackles that bound them to the latter.

Such was the result and the fate of the first great reforms attempted in Japan. They were on a comprehensive and elevated scale, altogether out of proportion to the executive ability of the Government and to the conscious demands of the people. No wonder they ended like many other Utopian endeavours of enlightened despots. But when we judge the Taika and Taiho laws by their far-reaching effects, we cannot brand them as altogether useless—much less as injurious. Like all great ideas, they served as a beacon light for future generations. The few pre-eminently instructive features of the reforms which have survived criticism and abuse, disuse and decay, may be summed up as follows :—

(1) They were instituted on the initiative of the Crown, and not at the instance of the people ;

(2) They were largely a transcription of a highly developed foreign model, and not an indigenous outcome ;

(3) They accomplished some definite objects, albeit but a small fraction of the scope envisaged by their framers ;

(4) They established the monarchical principle and set the ruling dynasty firmly on the throne ;

(5) None the less did they uphold the object of government as the welfare of the people, rather than the interest of a ruling class;

(6) Their approval of exotic laws and institutions stimulated the adoption of foreign manners and customs, thus expanding the mental vision of the nation.

History teaches that a reform so sudden and radical is sure to be followed by a reaction. The Taika reform furnishes another illustration to the old lesson.

When the moving spirit of the reforms, the Emperor Tenchi, passed away, and was succeeded by his son, there arose in 678 a revolt led by Tenchi's brother, who ascended the throne soon vacated by the death of his nephew. He did not, however, carry his reactionary measures very far. Neither did he revoke the codes promulgated by his brother. They were left on the statute books—not to be strictly observed, but to be conserved for some future use. Laws too advanced are useless ornaments of a State, and too many ornaments hinder proper movements of a body politique. "The more laws, the less justice," says a German proverb.

As legislation and a legal instrument, the Taika innovations and the Taihō and other laws may have failed in their object. But their educative influence in opening the eyes of the nation to visions of a higher alien culture cannot be over-estimated.

In this connection we are forcibly reminded of Ruskin's definition of good and bad laws—namely, "A good law is one that holds, whether you recognize it or not; a bad law is one that cannot, however much you ordain it." It is evident to which kind the Taika and Taihō laws belonged. But it

must be said of them that some of the statutes "held" in a mysterious way. Like a stream that is lost in its course and runs underground for a distance, then emerges into sight, some of the provisions of the laws made their appearance now and then in the judicial history of the country.

#### 5. CIVILIZATION OF THE NARA AND HEIAN PERIODS

Conforming to the centralizing idea as put forth in his "Principles," urged by the desire to promote general progress and actuated by religious zeal, Prince Shôtoku launched the gigantic scheme of creating a model and central capital in the midst of the country, still in a semi-barbarous condition.

The area within which he gathered and mingled all the elements of a new civilization became, in the course of a century (by A.D. 710), the first capital—by which is meant the seat of government, including, first of all, the residence of the Emperor and the offices of administration. Until this time, the capital had shifted from place to place at the beginning of each reign. This custom was due to the common belief that, where death occurred, the place was polluted, and the public offices moved where the new ruler had been residing before he was crowned. In an age when State functions were not yet fully organized, when archives were scanty and when buildings were primitive, no great inconvenience ensued from this constant shifting of residence. But, with the growing centralization of public authority and an increased staff of officials, more permanent quarters were needed, and the technical skill essential for these could now be supplied by immigrant labour from the continent.

Japan's position in Korea was hopelessly weakened by the union of the small states of that country

under the practical administration of China, and her military adventures terminated rather dishonourably in the middle of the seventh century, not to be revived for over 900 years. Of the Korean principalities which were absorbed by China, two, Pakche and Kognryn, called by the Japanese Kudara and Koma, respectively, were the greatest sufferers. In consequence of repeated national disasters, emigrants surged out from these regions in successive waves, to find a second home. Central Japan, including the wide plain in which Tokyo is situated, afforded safety and shelter for thousands of refugee nobles and plebeians. Historical accounts and geographical names attest the great extent of this migration, and, as these refugees were far ahead of the natives in culture, their contribution to Japanese civilization was correspondingly great. Regarded as an invaluable asset in the promotion of arts and crafts, they were welcomed with open arms. Those of noble birth were treated on equal terms with the Japanese aristocracy, while those of lower social grades were induced to settle with many special privileges. Lands were given them gratis. They enjoyed immunity from taxation for several years. The farmers were settled in groups, but artisans dwelt in large villages and towns. They seem to have been very quickly assimilated with the native population. How much they helped in the improvement of agriculture is not known, but in the various branches of art, and of fine arts in particular, their service was tremendous.

The edifices and carvings of wood which have survived the ravages of time and are still to be seen in the present town of Nara, show the high degree of mental and manual refinement, of creative force and of that strange elusiveness that characterizes

religious art. Fragile works all, but every bit showing a master's hand. A thousand pities that there was no Pentalicon near by! Bronze, however, supplied the material for objects requiring size and durability. The Daibutsu of Nara required 488 tons of copper and 350 pounds of gold.

The glory that was Nara can be traced to many sources. Greece herself contributed her quota through Bactria and Byzantium. Naturally the Chinese art of the Han period and the Hindu, through Buddhism, were the two main currents of artistic influence; but the Persian and the Byzantine factors, coming by way of Tibet, had their share in influencing the Chinese art of the North-South Dynasties in the fifth century. In China the T'ang period owes its inspiration and technique to the preceding dynasties of Sui and of the North-South. From the last-named Korea got her art, which she handed down to the Japanese during the time when Asuka was the capital. When Nara was founded, half a century later, only a few miles from Asuka, a great many artists who helped embellish the latter place must still have been alive and active. Moreover, direct and frequent communication with China was a strong incentive and advantage in beautifying the new capital. However eager and mentally ripe the people were to adopt an alien culture, it would have been impossible were material means wanting; and the timely discovery of gold, in 747, in the north-eastern province of Mutsu supplied this very want.

## 6. DECADENCE OF IMPORTED CULTURE

The severance of relations with Korea, from whence Japan had been importing continental culture, turned her attention to more direct and

intimate communication with China. With the control of large financial resources, due to the nationalization of land and labour, and to the more efficient organization of administration, and to stricter frugality following the abandonment of the overseas expansion policy, the Court could further consolidate and centralize its powers. The means adopted for the furtherance of this end was the removal of the Capital from Nara to a new locality—at an enormous expense of men and money. It is not clear why this apparently unnecessary step was taken. One can indulge in diverse guesses as to the real motive. One can be cynical or pious. Whatever the motive, it does not appear that there was urgent necessity, unless it were, as is often alleged by historians, the desire to inaugurate a new society, freed from priestly despotism and excessive Chinese influence.

A city was planned for the present site of Kyôto on an unprecedented scale, large enough to accommodate 1,000,000 inhabitants. All the public buildings were finished in the style of the T'ang architecture. Thousands of men were set to work day by day, so that the whole city was completed in a few years (A.D. 784-794). The labour employed was partly forced, but mostly free. The fugitive slave law which figured rather prominently in the Taihō code was but little mentioned, from which we may infer that much of the labour was voluntary. The nobles and the priests vied in making the place the centre of power and culture. They succeeded remarkably in many aspects of a capital city, and they succeeded too well in copying China—copying China not only in outward architectural effect, but also in institutions, rites and ceremonies, in dress and in manners. The name itself was copied from the



continent. *Heian*, "Peaceful Security," was the Chinese equivalent for *sans souci*. More generally, it was simply called Kyoto, the Capital.

In this new city the erudite talked in a stilted Chinese fashion; Chinese idioms filtered into the vernacular of the lower classes of society; poets were a mint of Chinese phrases; priests recited holy scriptures by rote in Chinese intonations; statesmen referred to Chinese history for wisdom and to Chinese classics for inspiration; schools flourished where the Chinese language was taught. A sinofied Japanese cut a figure no less ridiculous than an Italianate Englishman in the days of Euphuism. Exchange of compliments and of ambassadors was frequent between the Courts of Loyang and Kyôto during the ninth century. Kyôto for the first three or four generations could be compared with the London of the Restoration or with the Russian metropolis of Peter the Great. The courtiers led a sham life, playing with the foreign customs, heedless of signs of impoverishment and discontent in the country. It looked as though the very soul of the people were utterly lost in the labyrinth of an alien civilization. But the native instinct proved too strong for complete sinofication.

Early in the ninth century, two systems, which fortunately coalesced later on, were invented to convey Japanese sounds in simplified forms of Chinese writing.<sup>1</sup>

The *Kana*, as these signs of the syllabary were called, consisted of forty-seven letters instead of some 20,000 or 30,000 Chinese ideograms, and sounded the first trumpet of revolt against Chinese bibliolatriy and epeolatriy, and were, as well, the

<sup>1</sup> Compare the author's *Japanese Traits and Foreign Influences* (London).

first step in the democratization of learning. The schools under the patronage of the nobility, who first erected them to train their own protégés in Chinese studies, but especially the schools started by the monasteries for the lay pupils, encouraged the spread of the *kana*. The native poetry, *uta*, which had been well-nigh displaced by imitations of Chinese prosody, began to lift up its head. By the middle of the ninth century, we see a Department of Poetry—a sort of Poet Laureate's Office—formed in the Court, and, soon after, a new collection of *uta* compiled under official editorship. Now there is something essentially feminine in *uta* in contrast to the masculinity of the Chinese *shi*. By the use of the phonetic *kana*, women could freely give vent, in the *uta*, to their tenderest emotions and inmost thoughts. The courtiers, whom Chinese studies, far from making masculine, had only enervated, were made susceptible to feminine influences. Poetry was soon followed by stories illustrative of, or connected with, it. Then fiction was invented, in which poetry still played a predominating rôle, and all these literary amusements were the favourite pastime of women. Indeed, the greatest writings of the eleventh and twelfth centuries were the works of the gentle sex.<sup>1</sup>

The signs of a revival of national spirit were visible in other fields also. The dress of the nobility suddenly changed from the Chinese travesty to a native design. Artists, too, who had been copying Chinese models, and adumbrating continental scenes which they had never beheld, and portraying Chinese

<sup>1</sup> The best example is *Lady Murasaki's "Story of Genji,"* so faithfully translated by Mr. Waley. See also *Sei Shonagon's "The Pillow-Book,"* by the same translator. See further Karl Florenz, *Geschichte der japanischen Litteratur*, pp. 155-230.

heroes, now began to ply their brush to depict the scenery, characters and manners of their own country, so that before the tenth century closed there was a sprouting of genuine Japanese art. But this renaissance was confined to intellectual activities alone. If it was most accentuated in the Court and among the grandees, it still remained only an intellectual conviction—perhaps a fashion—and failed to arouse them to the realities of political and social life. In country parts remote from Kyôto insurrections were frequent; but the *literati* could not wield a sword, and the Court, having squandered its income in embellishing the city, could ill afford an expedition; hence insurrections in one district were always quelled by employing the country nobles of another. The consequence was that offices and honours were lavishly conferred on the successful fighters. To the rude provincials, these were great assets to their pretensions. To the Court and its hangers-on, the nefarious sale of ranks was a great asset to their pockets. With the money derived from the lands of which the barons robbed the Court they paid for the honours which it alone could bestow.

In the matter of religion, too, there was visible a decided change towards absorbing the continental into the Japanese faith. Under the euphemistic name of "Traces fallen from the Original Home," a doctrine was set forth that Buddha, in his universal love and pity, had left no nation without witness of himself, that the gods which different peoples worship in different lands under different names were only traces of the one original truth, the Buddha himself. The 8,000,000 gods worshipped in Japan were but replicas, the avatars, of the Buddhist pantheon. This syncretism was congenial to the eclectic soul

of the Japanese and the nationalistic conscience of the followers of the Indian faith.

The legal codes copied from China failed to function. They were only nominally in force. It became a common practice for the law-court, in pronouncing judgment, to begin with the words "According to reason" (*dōri*), whenever it was not in perfect accord with the written statutes. Those who sued for justice, also requested that their case should be tried "according to reason," as though the codes in use were opposed to reason! Thus gradually a new set of laws and juridical customs—a sort of equity—came into existence, and gave rise to the feudal code of 1232, known as the "*Jōei* Articles," from the name of the era.

The agrarian provisions of Taihō did not succeed much better than the Gracchian. The extension of *tatokoro* or *shōyen* (*latifundia*) went on unimpeded, in spite of several subsequent decrees issued against it, forbidding permanent private ownership of land. Even lands brought under tillage from a state of wilderness, or those that were given in reward for meritorious public service, were, according to law, to revert to the State after the third generation. Though grants (*beneficia*) made to ecclesiastical institutions were to be renewed from year to year, in practice an annual registration was out of the question. It was perhaps even more impracticable than the *akachita* or *handen*, a periodic renewal of the allotments every six years.

Temporary tenancies, as all estates were, gradually became emphyteusis, and these in turn were transformed to all intents and purposes into permanent and absolute private properties. Only the small cultivators placed their land (*commendatio*) under the protection of the larger owners. Thus in the

course of the ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries, most of the land, notably in regions far removed from the seat of government, fell into the hands of powerful families. Some of them owned an area as wide as an average province, and had at their beck and call thousands of able-bodied villeins to defend their doubtful cause and their ill-acquired possessions. As these barons owed only lip service to the central authority, they paid little into its coffers. Sometimes they registered their estates in the name of Court nobles or of monasteries, and in this way they were exempted from taxation. The extensive enclosures show that agriculture must by this time have become quite profitable. But the thousands evicted from their small-holdings turned into homeless marauders, furnishing fit material for rebellion. The more virile among them enlisted themselves in the employ of the new lords as voluntary retainers. These were allotted pieces of land, on condition that they should render knight-service or pay scutage.

The growth of the *Hōken* (Feudal) system is indigenous to this country, as it has been to most others. It seems to have been a necessary stage in the realistic development of every nation. The transformation of the Frankish allodial holdings into fiefs affords an exact analogy to the process that took place in this country. The idea that the land lying within a ruler's realm is his absolute property (*dominium directum*) is a common fiction of land-holding everywhere. The English theory that "all the lands and tenements of England in the hands of subjects are holden mediately or immediately of the king,"<sup>1</sup> had been laid down centuries before in the Chinese "Book of Poetry," where it was said:

<sup>1</sup> Coke on Littleton, chap. i, sec. 1.

"Under the heavens, every spot is the sovereign's ground." The *daimyo* (milites, barones) and the *samurai* (retainers, miles, chivaler, vassals or maintainers), being imbued with this theory, did not feel comfortable, nor indeed perfectly secure, without obtaining a semblance of a legal title to their possessions. The larger land-holders managed to get a sanction from the Crown, and so turned nominally tenants-in-chief (*tenantes in capite*), and, because they owned several *myo-den*, literally clept lands—estates bearing proper names—they were later called *daimyo*, "Great Names." These sub-infeudated their fiefs to their vassals or retainers, *kerai*, literally "house-comers," by a process corresponding to the English custom of livery or seisin. These land-holders, large and small, swore on their swords, in the name of all the gods, to be true and faithful to "the Son of heaven," who lived in invisible seclusion at the capital, Kyôto. They rendered no direct service to him, nor did he miss it; for he had near and round his person, to wait on him and do his bidding, be it in State affairs, or be it in trivial matters of daily life, a large number of servitors, who were granted tenure much like the European serjeanty (*servitium*), both grand and petit. These tenants by serjeanty were called *kugé*, literally "State families," usually known as Court nobles.

#### 7. LATIFUNDIA FORMATION

In the development and distribution of *shoyen*, religious bodies were no less sinners than the secular nobility. We have seen under what circumstances Buddhism was introduced into Japan. We have seen royal favours freely showered upon its professors—greatly to the financial detriment of the protector, since ecclesiastical domains enjoyed

immunity from taxation, thus depriving the Crown of vast sources of income and diverting large numbers of people from productive employment. The magnificence still to be noticed in Nara makes us marvel at the munificence with which the priesthood was treated. Upon the hierarchy of priests were bestowed Court ranks. The more promising among them were sent at Government expense to China—and sometimes as far as “the Holy Land” of India—to prosecute their studies where the feet of Sakya Muni had trod. Illustrious teachers were invited from overseas. Every province was provided with a branch of the main temple which had its seat in the capital; every household was encouraged to have a statue of Buddha. Monasteries, nunneries, asylums, schools, were established and placed under ecclesiastical control. Religious foundations of every description were richly endowed both by State and by private devotees. The great landlords, nearing their end, got rid of their ill-gotten goods by bequeathing them to the *tera* (monasteries). Likewise the holders of little patches had them transferred to the *tera*, under whose name they were safer from depredations than under their own. The priesthood became a coveted vocation, and, in an age when high public posts were the monopoly of the nobility, the ecclesiastical calling opened a way for talents without respect to social advantages, and we are not surprised to see some of the prominent leaders of religious thought and pioneers of philanthropic enterprises arising from among the socially unfavoured classes. No wonder the ambitious hastened to don the ink-dyed robes. The ambitious? Yes, it was they, and not the meek and the pious, who later wrecked the true mission of the faith they professed.

Relying on Court favours and on their wealth, the more aspiring abused their prestige for selfish ends or took sides in political quarrels. The annals of the Court of Kyôto were not altogether wanting in a Wolsey or a Rasputin. About 770, there was even a priestly aspirant to the throne. It was not by hypocrisy and superstition only that the clergy won the hearts of women and courtiers. They resorted to more audacious means. In course of time they trained an army among themselves or procured mercenary troops, and did not scruple at times to march against the Court itself in martial array, carrying at the head of their procession some symbol of their holy profession. In so vexatious and unruly a manner did the monks behave, that an Emperor of the early twelfth century exclaimed in despair, "There are three things utterly beyond my control—the flow of the river Kamo, the numbers on a dice, the priests of Mt. Hiei." And so they were.

#### 8. THE RISE AND INFLUENCE OF PROVINCIAL FAMILIES

One redeeming feature of the accumulation of landed estates was the rise of local centres throughout the country. Small villages grew into towns and towns into cities. Little chapels developed into temples. Primitive barter gave way to commerce. Industries began to prosper, and arts to improve, manners softened, living was made easier. In short, culture became more universal as a result of the decentralization due to *latifundia*. As landlords grew in wealth and power, the more energetic among them aspired to regal power—not to deprive the Crown of its dignity, but to steal its power. This explains why, by the middle of the tenth century,



there arose several revolts in the outskirts of the Empire.

In speaking of local families, it must be observed that no small number among them were scions of royal stock. From the beginning of our history, it was the custom for the Emperor's numerous progeny by his wife and morganatic consorts to be dispersed in different provinces as dukes, governors, abbots, etc. Under the title of *waké* (division), they were settled in rural districts in a gubernatorial capacity. In the early part of the ninth century, a registration of families in the municipal districts (Kyôto and its environs) was made, and the result showed a large proportion of families royally connected by blood. Of some 1180 families, inclusive of their registered ramifications, there were 360, or 30 per cent., who traced their descent to the Imperial family; 450, or 38 per cent., were of "divine" line, descendants of the native population, whereas 370, or 31 per cent., were of alien or immigrant origin. Needless to add, the proportion varied in different places.

The more powerful local grandees called themselves the "residents" (*jû-nin*, the domiciled), to distinguish themselves from absentees, who might have a claim to land only on paper. Theirs was the right of possession, which was nine points of the law. Against the absentees and the neighbouring barons they had to be on constant guard, in order to preserve, as it were, their squatter rights. To this end they gave lands to their subordinates, and by this process of sub-infeudation bound them to themselves and to the locality. They further trained young men among their tenants in the arts of archery and horsemanship. It has already been stated that the horse was not native to the country, and it is probable that it was first imported from the continent

more for warlike than for peaceful purposes. However, the country being mountainous, and, wherever it was flat, being irrigated for rice culture, the use of cavalry was never of wide application. In the eastern parts of the country it did assume some importance, as there were more uncultivated flat plains, and also because the climate and soil were better adapted for horse-breeding. Military exercises were therefore called "the art of bow and horse," and only long after the men trained in them were known as *samurai* (literally attendants), or *bushi* (fighting gentlemen), did the term "Bushido" come to mean the moral precepts, the *noblesse oblige*, of the warrior class.

#### 9. FEUDALISM AND SHÔGUNACY (SHÔGUNATE)

Thus by the eleventh century sovereign power came to be practically contested among three parties : (1) the Emperor, who was its only legitimate source, (2) the local landholding class, who embodied strong military prowess, and (3) the priests, the spoiled favourites of the Court. Representing respectively the political, the military and the spiritual pillars of the Empire, they were at loggerheads one with another, to the detriment of the general public welfare. If only the Crown could have commanded a force of its own—which its finances did not permit—it had all the claim and the prestige for an early settlement. The question became imminent which of these forces should gain ascendancy, for upon the decision of this point depended the safety of the realm. But none of the three would move on its own initiative. As to the Court nobility, headed by the Fujiwaras, who surrounded the throne, it was a negligible element. Indulgence in piety, luxury and belles-lettres reduced them to literary tricksters, and

abject obedience to Chinese classics made them despicable sticklers for empty ceremonies.

At this juncture the Crown called upon the military upstarts for aid in crushing the rising tide of priestly arrogance. And the work was done without great effort. The effect, however, was not altogether propitious. Among the military families there were at first many rival factions. By the middle of the eleventh century two of these were outstanding survivors of the mutually destructive combats, and those which were not direct descendants of either allied and associated themselves with one or the other of the two. Hence, to show imperial favour to one of them, or to both by turns, was to sow the seeds of hostility, from which the country had to reap the whirlwind two centuries later.

The Minamoto (otherwise called Gen) and the Taira (Hei or Pei) were arrayed in two opposing camps, the latter under the red and the former under the white flag—as in the Wars of the Roses. The Minamotos' headquarters were in the east, and their strength lay in their brawny arms and fiery steeds. The Tairas owned enormous tracts of land covering nearly half the area of the whole country in the western and southern parts, and they commanded the sea. All the lesser nobles were drawn either into or around these two camps.

The rivalry between the two families began to be apparent about the middle of the tenth century, and steadily became more and more acute. After a sharp contest, lasting for some decades, the Tairas were practically annihilated and the Minamotos took the reins of government. This is the beginning of the so-called Shôgunate (or Shôgunacy) and of the so-called duarchy, which lasted until 1868. "Shôgunate" is a hybrid term denoting the political

institution by which the government was actually carried on by the Shôgun (generalissimo), in the name of the Emperor. The founder of this system was Yoritomo, who fixed his abode at Kamakura in 1186.

The Kamakura Period lasted a century and a half (1192-1333), during which the founder's family was displaced by his wife's, the Hôjôs. According as different families succeeded to power, the seat of the Shôgunate moved from place to place, much as the Capital had been changed from reign to reign in ancient times. While the Ashikagas ruled, they lived in Kyôto (1333-1573). By the beginning of the seventeenth century, when it fell to the family of the Tokugawas, with their newly established seat in Yedo (Tokyo), the Shôgunate was accepted as a natural form of government. The Emperor's Court had lost all show of authority, for every abortive attempt—and there were repeated attempts—to regain imperial prestige at the expense of Shôgunal power was made a pretext for its further diminution. Under the Hôjôs, the Crown was deprived of some 2000 estates. It is true that the Shôgunate continued to exercise power in the name of the Emperor. However stricken by poverty he may have become, he was always regarded *de jure* as the fount and source of all authority. In theory, all laws and ordinances emanated from his "divine" will. The honours paid to his sacred person were often an empty form, like the worship of an idol. The revenue allotted to the Court was also like an offering made to carven images—a mere pittance, inadequate for any public purpose, inadequate even for a respectable living, being not much more than 150,000 bushels of rice yearly, with occasional gifts. Compare this allowance with the 40,000,000 bushels

at the disposal of the Shôgun ! Still, the conviction never wavered that the Tenno was the sole legitimate overlord of the land. This conviction was weakened by the doctrine that the Shôgun was the sole viceroy, ordained to execute the royal will. What the prophet gained was so much loss to Allah ! Throughout the Kamakura and the following epochs of the Shôguns' rule, including the anarchic epoch known as the " Age of Contending States " (1573-1615), when every little baron was a law unto himself, scarcely any dared to cast a doubt upon the claims of the Emperor. Only, nobody voiced the claims from the housetop. Now and then a few little Voltaires gave expression to their scepticism in sneering verses, but no serious Rousseau undermined the artificially fostered belief in the righteousness of the Shôgunate régime. Every argument that can be adduced in justifying Cromwell's conduct may also be applied to the Realpolitik of Yoritomo and of the Shôgunate in general—and Carlyles were not wanting in the Orient.

If, theoretically, the Shôgunate was untenable, the moral renovation it effected was greatly to its credit. In the Nara and Kyôto days, thanks to the influence of the intellectual awakening due to Chinese and Buddhist literature, in which women took such a prominent part, ideas and manners became first refined, then mellowed, and later mellifluous. Feminine influence brought about effeminacy. Quick wit, sharp repartee, skill in verse-grinding, were valued above solid worth of character. Petty, clever men, who could catch the ears of women by a phrase, were the heroes of the day.

From the standpoint of morals, then, the rise of the military clans was a national stimulus. A new standard was now set up in the evaluation of men.

Force of character, energy, straightforwardness, integrity, came to be admired in man. To be sure, crudity, roughness and brutality too often marred these manly qualities, but they were discouraged by new sects of Buddhism, which exercised a deep and abiding influence on the mind of the *samurai*. I refer particularly to the Zen and the Nichiren sects. The tenets of the former were not inaptly called the religion of the *samurai*, while those of the latter were celebrated for the enthusiasm and patriotism which it knew how to evoke in its votaries. The priests, in the early days of Japanese Buddhism, were active missionaries and philanthropists; later, they squandered their time in light literature and politics, but in the Kamakura Period they turned philosophers, to whose words of wisdom practical statesmen and warriors listened when they were in a dilemma. Not to be despised in its spiritual influence at this time, was the dissemination of the metaphysics and philosophy of the Sung School from China.

The ideal of womanhood, too, witnessed a noticeable change. No more was it of a courtly (courtesan!) type, whose wily smiles and looks askance beguiled unsophisticated youth—and, for that matter, the aged—not the type or types that adorn the pages of Lady Murasaki's *Tale of Genji*. Kamakura furnished a sterner pattern to follow—a pattern that was no whit inferior to that of the mother of the Gracchi or the Roman matron of Republican days. Illicit relations, which were the order of the day in the Kyôto Period, were now punished with severity—even with death. There had been a certain romantic element in the former custom of a husband living apart, in his own house, and making visits to his wife, who remained under the paternal

roof; but, in the new age, a wife had to share bed and board in her husband's house, thus strengthening the domestic tie. The Shōgunate régime was essentially militaristic in character, and under its rule the whole country became a camp. The virtues now most praised in the gentle sex were those required in the maintenance of that régime—thus developed domesticity, self-abnegation, frugality, fortitude, hardiness.

#### IO. MONGOL CHINA, KOREA AND EUROPE

No survey of the Middle Ages of Japan can be complete without the mention of three events—very different in character, but of equally lasting importance in the subsequent history of the nation; events whose significance lay not so much in themselves as in the psychological effect upon the people, bringing as they did new factors within the mental horizon of her sons. These three events were: (1) the Mongol invasion; (2) Hideyoshi's expedition to Korea; (3) the arrival of Europeans, and particularly the coming of Christian missionaries.

(1) Japan's relations with China continued to be cultural and commercial. Ships plied between the coasts of the two countries for purposes of trade. But, during the period of which we are now treating—namely, between the eleventh and sixteenth centuries—China was not at a standstill, neither was she always in a state of peaceful evolution. In the course of his gigantic enterprise (1162–1227), Genghis Khan established his sway from the China Sea to the Dnieper, and his grandson, Kublai or Tamerlane, added Korea to his inheritance (1263). He now yearned to bring Japan under subjection. He dispatched to the Court a letter, in which he threatened an invasion should Japan refuse to submit

herself without demur. There could be but one answer from the high-spirited *samurai* Government: this was a flat refusal, followed by a challenge thrown in the teeth of the arch-conqueror by killing his ambassadors (1268). The sequel to this was the coming of the then formidable fleet of nearly 1000 vessels, bearing 40,000 Mongol and Korean troops (1274), and, upon its failure, the sending of another armada in 1281 with nearly 200,000 men. This was the first time that Japan was invaded by a foreign army, and when the rumours of its approach reached the land, all internal bickerings were forgotten and the nation was united as one man, and, thanks to their valour and to the aid of a timely hurricane, "the divine wind," the Mongol ships could hardly touch the coast. Scattered by the tempest, thousands of the invading troops were drowned, and the dejected remnant steered their way homeward. The episode was a repetition of Marathon, and the psychological effect was much the same. In Greece, the conquest was attributed to democracy. A similar success was later achieved by the English when they were not particularly democratic. From the words they had engraved on their commemorative medal—"The Lord sent His wind and scattered them"—one might suspect them of theocracy. In Japan, too, the gods were given thanks for the victory. The effect was prodigious, and has ever since remained in the national consciousness. Few events tried the nation more than the tribulation through which it passed during the anxious years of preparation and the two months of actual conflict. Few things knitted all ranks of society more firmly, and so stimulated the spirit of co-operation and self-sacrifice, of devotion to a common cause and of confidence in their own strength. China and Korea,



upon whom the nation had hitherto looked with reverence, had betrayed the trust and forfeited their claim to respect.

(2) As regards the status of Korea, this had not been made sufficiently clear. Japan never definitely abrogated the rights she obtained by conquest under Empress Jingû. Japan had certainly met with reverses, and at one time her headquarters there were demolished, but she had always entertained the idea of some day recovering what she had lost.

The part Korea took in the Mongol armada made Japan realize afresh where future danger lurked. The Japanese made progress in ship-building after the Mongol invasion, and after seeing the Portuguese merchantmen. In the middle of the sixteenth century, numberless raids were committed by Japanese buccaneers along the Chinese coast. Some of them plied their craft as far as the Philippines, Annam, Siam and the South Sea Islands. The instinct and love of seafaring in the race could now to some extent find vent. Hideyoshi, who had about this time attained to the Shôgunacy, and who, for the first time in her history, pacified the whole of Japan, now turned his attention to settling the old score with Korea and to returning the Mongol compliments of three centuries before. As Korea provided a way for Kublai through her territory, so she had to do the same for Hideyoshi. His adventures in the peninsula were at first successful, but at the Chinese frontiers the Japanese army was beaten back, with the usual accompaniment of epidemics and famine. However, the campaign was again taken up with fresh vehemence, and the Japanese troops were advancing, when the moving spirit of the whole enterprise was suddenly

vanquished by a power stronger than that of the Chinese or the Korean myrmidons. Hideyoshi died in 1598, and the 150,000 troops stationed in Korea were called home. Thus vanished like a summer dream the vast—and as some historians justly argue, the morally reprehensible—scheme of one of the greatest and brightest sons to whom Japan has ever given birth.

(3) Just as Japan's ignorance of Europe was absolute, so was Europe's ignorance of Japan until Marco Polo published his "Travels." It was on this narrative that Columbus based his calculations of Japan's longitude and made it his objective. When he landed in Salvador, he believed he had arrived in Zipangu (Japan), and he died under that delusion. The "discovery" of Japan was left to the Portuguese, Mendez Pinto, who was shipwrecked on a small southern island of Japan in 1542. In return for the succour he received, he taught the fishermen of the village the use of fire-arms. So highly was this new weapon esteemed that it did not take much longer than a decade or so before an important gunsmithy was started in the town of Sakai. Pinto's extraordinary account of his adventure circulated in Europe, gaining subsequently for him the sobriquet of "the Mendacious."

The door thus opened for intercourse with the West had for its immediate effect the introduction of Christianity and architecture, as well as of fire-arms and foreign shipbuilding. All these novel ideas spread like wild-fire. As to Christianity, so successful was the propaganda that, three decades after Francis Xavier's first preaching, the Church had won over a million souls; but, due to the vain boast of a Spanish pilot that his monarch sent priests abroad in order to prepare the ground for

his soldiers to follow, this foreign "evil faith" was prohibited under penalty of death.

The knowledge of fire-arms proved of timely use in the age which historians call that of "Contending States," when warfare was the daily pursuit of the great. Nobunaga won a battle (Nagasu, 1575) by the guns made after a Portuguese model. He also appropriated, for warlike uses, the design of the Christian steeple. As an annex to his castle, he built a tower ninety feet high, and this form of architecture still retains the name which betrays its religious origin—"the Hall of the Lord of Heaven" (Ten-shu-kaku). Is there something inherently pacific in Buddhism, that its pagoda never suggested the same idea?

Such in brief were the events and the march of progress that characterized the mediæval age of Japanese history. It was pre-eminently a heroic age. Towering figures of all shapes appear on the stage—some roughly hewn of granite, others gracefully chiselled and draped in rags, wandering about with pent-up emotions of pity or wrapt in thought, brooding over the fate of man. It was an age of romance, when lovers loved with the ferocious passion that would brook no interference. It was an age of contradictions, when the vanity of life was deeply felt and its glory extolled beyond measure. It was an age of realism, when no doctrine, be it never so profound, could move man to action unless it first took root in his heart of hearts. There was no dallying, no dilettantism. Everybody was standing on the brink of death, on the abyss of life. It was an age of personal freedom, of individual initiative, of large enterprise, of restless spirit, of thundering sound and lightning speed. Hideyoshi's plan of absorbing the whole of China was the

crowning act of this age, whether one looks upon it as the height of absurdity or of aspiration. His brief career dazzled his contemporaries. His mother ought to have dreamed of a meteor, instead of the sun, entering her bosom—when she conceived him. He was the leader, the type, of the age, when every man was an incurable Cyrano de Bergerac, with his eyes ever fixed upon the stars.

This age of storm and stress was now followed by one of lull and calm.

## II. UNIFICATION UNDER DESPOTISM

The pacification of the Empire brought about by Hideyoshi at the point of the sword was taken up by a political genius of the very first order, Iyeyasu, the founder of the Tokugawa dynasty. Long-suffering and crafty, far-seeing and unscrupulous, a veritable embodiment of Machiavellism and Hobbesism, he had been biding his time, and, when it came, with one blow he cleared of its inmates the framework Hideyoshi had raised with so much labour, and occupied it himself—fortifying it with stronger buttresses and enlarging it with new additions. He entered liberally into the labour of his predecessor, but so original were his administrative measures and so successful, that the Tokugawa Period, lasting for 265 years, may well deserve to be called a New Era.

Iyeyasu, far from taking up the notion of continental domination, concentrated his efforts upon internal peace and security. He knew that the Chinese expedition had been an adventure financially disastrous. He would not quarrel with the Middle Kingdom. He would not even meddle with Korea. He saw a growing menace from another quarter, and there he would erect a barrier—a double-barred barrier—to shut out the least mischief. That quarter

was Europe. For some decades before he assumed supremacy there had been coming to Japanese coasts foreign ships, flying different colours—Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, English. Though they were unanimous in stating the object of their voyage as trade pure and simple, they were not above suspicion. Their words were not absolutely trustworthy, and the news they communicated about Europe was not always harmonious. One national contradicted the statement of another. The Portuguese said something very different from the Spaniard, and an Englishman's story varied from a Dutchman's. Only in two respects they seemed all to agree, and that was in religion and in the love of money. But, even in religion, the love which they professed to be the teaching of their God, "Deus," did not seem to bind the Spaniard to the Dutch or the English. Iyeyasu learned, further, that in their own countries they were in the habit of burning or beheading each other, when one believed something slightly different from another. He was not at all convinced of the superiority of the Christian religion.

In their appreciation of money the European traders were distinctly sharp and keen. In the seventeenth century, the ratio of gold to silver in Japan was only 1 to 3 or 4. Naturally and zealously they exchanged their silver for our gold, draining the land of the latter metal in the short space of half a century (1601-1647) to the amount of nearly 50,000,000 ounces, besides 9,200,000 lb. of silver and over 300,000,000 lb. of copper. No wonder fear was aroused lest foreign trade should utterly impoverish the nation.

With cruel consistency, the Tokugawa Government pursued the policy of rooting out Christianity and of forbidding foreign trade. Throughout the

length and breadth of the land, placards were set up, even in the smallest villages, forbidding the worship of "Deus" on pain of death and promising rich reward to an informer. In 1637 the law was issued permitting no foreigner to land in the country and no native to leave it. Ships above fifty tons in size were not to be built. The country was thus hermetically sealed, and the famous age of exclusion was inaugurated, which lasted for nearly two and a half centuries.

Being cut off from the rest of the world, Japan's economic policy was based on the principle of self-sufficiency. This was secured by encouraging agriculture at the expense of trade and industry. Physiocratic theories were propounded to prove the justice of placing the farmer above other classes of the population, next to the warrior. The unit of measuring public revenue and private income was the *koku* (about five bushels) of rice. The Tokugawa Shôgun reserved for himself one-fourth of the area of the country, yielding annually, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, 4,000,000 *koku*—which amount was doubled by the middle of the nineteenth century, due to the natural increase of population and agriculture. The next mightiest lord commanded only one-seventh as much. None could aspire to rival the Shôgun. As to the Emperor's civil list, it was a mere bagatelle.

By cunning manœuvres, rather than by any open measure; by an intricate system of espionage, rather than by public feats of arms, the Tokugawa Shoguns succeeded in keeping nearly 300 *daimyo*, feudal lords, in utter subjection. Their fiefs were dovetailed, or, as we say, "dog-teethed," in such wise that the barons unfriendly to the Shôgun were surrounded by his creatures. In order to keep them from con-

cocting mischief in their territories, the *daimyo* or their consorts were required to live part of the year in Yedo. This meant constant journeying to and fro, with a retinue of several hundred and sometimes thousands of followers, necessitating an expenditure of three to seven-tenths of their revenue. Their energies were diverted from wars and rumours of wars to the enjoyment of carnal and intellectual pleasures in a large city. There was allowed for each man a tolerable amount of freedom of thought, as long as it did not trespass upon the question of Tokugawa legitimacy. There was established a marvellously well-ordered and well-regulated state (*Polizeistaat par excellence*!), strictly keeping within non-political bounds the thoughts and actions of its subjects. Man was a free and complete animal, except in the Aristotelian sense. Not content with depriving the intellect of any possible access to Western ideas, the Tokugawa Government made inaccessible such old Chinese writings as were in the least inclined to be liberal in sentiment. Education was fostered, but only "chartered philosophies," so to speak, were taught. Learning was made general. No longer was it to remain the monopoly of the priests and the nobility. Chu Hsi's interpretation of Confucian ethics was the approved system of learning. Any doctrine other than this was tabooed as heretical. Lao-tze was dangerous; Mencius was barely tolerated. Innovation in any respect, but most of all in ideas, was strictly forbidden. In the meantime Iyeyasu's grandson, the Prince of Mito, was an ardent student of Japanese history. He gathered together men of erudition, including a celebrated Chinese savant, and compiled a history of the country down to the middle of the fifteenth century, and, where he left off, private historians took up the tale and continued it to later

times. The impulse which was carrying historical research into verification of facts, told on political doctrines. Honest inquiry inevitably superseded the dogma of the Shôgun's legitimacy. Side by side with historical research, the study of the national faith was pursued with no less assiduity. Shinto made it more and more clear that the rightful ruler of the country was the Tennô and none else. Though this conclusion was couched in rhetorical disguise, it plainly showed the direction in which public opinion was steering.

The theoretical denunciation of the Shôgun's status would, however, by itself have borne little fruit except in the halls of an academy. But his sinews of power were, in the course of two centuries, relaxing badly. Long-continued luxury shattered the physical fitness of his retinue and undermined his financial strength. The peace of two and a half centuries ruined the morale of the military class. It gave impetus to arts and crafts, raised the standard of living, allowed time for study, fostered literature, and encouraged trade and industry, thus awakening the consciousness of the commonalty and enhancing the influence of merchants and capitalists.

## 12. WEAKNESS OF THE SHÔGUNAL RÉGIME

Even as late as the middle of the nineteenth century, the economic system of the Tokugawa Shôgunate was based on rice. In other words, it still rested on natural as opposed to money economy, though transition from the one to the other commenced in the latter part of the sixteenth century. It is true that metal money was known 900 years earlier, and that in the eighth century copper cash was in circulation. But only a small quantity was coined in the country, the bulk being introduced



from China. During the succeeding centuries, the country being split up into many semi-independent principalities, with little trade between them, a medium of exchange was not needed. By the middle of the sixteenth century the use of metal money became common for small transactions in large towns, and at the end of the same century Hideyoshi ordered large gold coins (*Koban*) to be struck, of a size and weight altogether out of proportion to the demands of commerce. Early in the Tokugawa era smaller gold and silver monies were coined, copper (bronze) still subserving best the daily wants of the public. As stated before, both of the precious metals were very cheap at the time, and were bought up in enormous quantities by foreign merchants. This fact will throw a sidelight on the motive which prompted the policy of seclusion. Within the country, the chief demand for gold and silver came from the *daimyo*, in whose hands they accumulated by way of taxation or of confiscation. But they did not remain long in the palaces of the great. Lavish in their habits, the barons freely dispersed them in the purchase of luxuries. It was, indeed, in this manner that gold and silver passed into general circulation. Rice, which still was ostensibly the standard of value, was replaced as such by money.

It was the fixed policy of the Tokugawa Government economically to weaken the barons and to enrich its own seat, the city of Yedo. The ordinance compelling the *daimyo* to make biennial visits to the Court of the Shôgun was actuated by the desire to strip them of their savings. These periodical processions, constituting caravans of thousands of people, moving back and forth in state for days and weeks, were highly picturesque, but wasteful, undertakings. In earlier days, provisions were carried

in its train by the caravanserais; but it was found more convenient to buy these en route, and thus money facilitated the journeys, and the journeys served to distribute money along the main roads of the Empire.

The development of money economy had for natural consequence the growth of cities—in particular of Osaka and Kyôto and of Tokyo (called Yedo in olden times). Due to the fact that it was the residence of thousands of idlers, the Shôgun's capital attracted artists and artisans of every description. It soon became the centre of artistic and intellectual life. It did not aspire to rival the ancient capital of Kyôto in classical art, neither did it emulate Osaka in commerce. But Yedo inaugurated its own arts and industries—as, for instance, the many-coloured block-prints. As the city prospered, there came into existence craft and merchant guilds, and when these joined forces they could defy the two-sworded order. Capitalism lifted its head to overawe Militarism. The *daimyo* and the *samurai*, who received their income in rice, had first to sell this, and when, for some reason or other—e.g. a good harvest—the price was lowered, they could not afford to buy other commodities. Or, when, in consequence of debasement of currency, prices soared, the *samurai* gained nothing; for whatever surplus he got from his rice-stipend, he had to pay for other wares. The Government, whose revenue was paid in rice, naturally tried to keep up the price of the grain; but, when this policy succeeded, the proletarian masses down-town gave immediate alarm. Between the well-being of the *samurai*, upon whom his safety depended, and that of the citizens, who made his capital prosperous, the Shôgun wavered in his policy.

Meanwhile most of the feudal barons were badly in debt to mercantile houses. One of the greatest lords, whose fief included some wealthy provinces, had contracted debts to such an extent that it would have taken 250 years to redeem them by annual instalments out of his revenue. Another equally prominent feudal prince had to cut down the stipends of his retainers by 50 per cent. The Shôgun's Government itself had to resort from time to time to summary, sometimes shameful, means to save its liegemen. When their debts to merchants reached an amount practically beyond their means to redeem, it calmly stepped in and proclaimed by edict a general repudiation (*seisachtheia*, benevolences!). To its credit be it said, that on such occasions the creditors were given an interest-bearing promissory note, though for a sum far below the loan. True to the proverb, "The borrower is the slave of the lender," the military order could ill assert its authority over the merchants. They dishonoured their profession, and the people knew this. While they were thus steadily losing ground, the moneyed class was rising in affluence, and, in consequence, gaining in independence and intelligence. Two-thirds of the nation's wealth was computed to have fallen into the hands of the Osaka merchants. It was only a question of time when feudalism would collapse under economic pressure.

Under Pax Tokugawa and money economy, cities and towns grew in number and size, not, indeed, on account of increased population, but of the rural exodus. The peasants migrated into the towns in huge numbers, since the fiscal burden was imposed exclusively upon their shoulders. In consequence, the very aspect of towns changed in character. Formerly they were, except in the ports, clusters of

dwelling at the foot of the hills on which perched the baronial forts (acropolis); but now, as there was no need for strong fortifications, the castles were built on lower ground and cities grew around instead of below them.

### 13. CAUSES OF THE FALL OF THE SHÔGUNACY

Whoever turns the pages of the later history of the Tokugawa Period must be struck by two characteristic types of social events. I allude, firstly, to the frequent occurrence of peasant insurrections, which foreshadowed the downfall of the Government and the rising tide of democracy, and, secondly, to the so-called "domestic" imbroglio (*o-iye-sôdô*) of *daimyo* houses, which brought into clear light the rottenness of the family system existing in high places. A word of explanation is perhaps necessary regarding the second. The *daimyo* held his territory by a strict law of blood succession. In default of an heir, his estate fell escheat; hence the immense importance of having a son. In consequence, concubinage was not only tolerated, but legalized. When the mistress and the lawful wife had each a child, there naturally ensued a keen competition which should inherit the house. Interested partisans espoused the one or the other cause. Murder, poisoning, open battle, not to mention petty jealousies and spite—fit themes for novelists and playwrights—added picturesqueness or nauseating flavour to the otherwise monotonous lives passed in baronial mansions. These domestic events taught the moral that cant cannot endure forever.

The visit of Commodore Perry, in 1852, laid bare the fundamental weakness in the position of the Shôgun. In the beginning, his high-handed proceeding was morally defensible, because it was

deserved, since there was none else fit to govern the country. But in the latter days the Shôgun forfeited his claim to confidence and respect, and the criteria of orthodoxy which had been artificially created during several generations could no longer prop up his pretensions. It was evident that he could not cope with the reality which confronted him. He signed the treaty with Perry and later with Harris. Had he power to do so? If he had not, had he influence enough with the Court to have it sanctioned or ratified in the Emperor's name? In the Court and among the *daimyo* there were not a few who were on the look-out for the first opportunity to overthrow the Shôgunate system—or at least the Tokugawa Shôgun then in power. Whether, among those who most violently contested his right to negotiate with foreigners, there was utterly absent any ambition to replace him, is still an open question. It is sufficient for our purpose now to know that the presence of the American squadron helped to render articulate the dormant public opinion of the age. The cry of "Away with the Barbarians (foreigners) and down with the Shôgun!" at first feebly whispered among the courtiers and the southern *samurai*, became more and more audible, until it resorted to cannon to make itself heard.

Of the 276 *daimyo*, a large number were related to the Tokugawa house by blood kinship or by ties of closest friendship; but in the south-west were strong clans—Satsuma and Chôshû—who were never really reconciled to the Tokugawa hegemony. They had waited 260 years for their turn; hence they were loudest in denouncing the Shôgun for over-stepping his competence in signing the treaty of amity (and later of commerce) with America,

and, soon after, with England, France and Holland. These barons declared that, if the Shôgun was afraid of these powers, they would on their own account oppose and defy them.

The lord of Chôshû fired on the unoffending ships belonging to these countries, and in consequence he suffered, in 1864, the utter destruction of his fort at Shimonoseki by their combined forces. In 1862 the lord of Satsuma was proceeding in solemn array to Yedo, when two English tradesmen, lately arrived from China, boasting that they knew "how to treat these dogs," cut the procession and were instantly attacked, with the result that one of them was slain. This event was next year followed by the bombardment of the city of Kagoshima by the English navy.

The bragging *samurai* of Chôshû and Satsuma were now thoroughly convinced of the superiority of Western arms, and were summarily converted to the necessity of opening the country to foreign trade. They had, moreover, the result of the Opium War in China constantly before their eyes. The first lesson that the West gave to Japan was that of self-defence by arms, and the necessity of being armed.

As to the abolition of the Shôgunate, the last Shôgun himself—a clear and far-seeing man, Yoshinobu by name—had long recognized that the signs of the time were against the system he represented. Gladly would he have surrendered his office and his domains, scattered throughout the country, to the rightful sovereign. Kômei-tennô, himself a forceful character, saw his time coming at last. The time looked auspicious, and the city of Yedo immediately opened its gates to let the imperial army in. Not so easily convinced as the Shôgun were his relatives

and retainers in the country parts. In spite of his orders and entreaties to the contrary, they took up arms, and civil war broke out in several places. In this general turmoil there loomed in the consciousness of the belligerents a grave danger of foreign intervention, the rumour of which contributed much to the speedy surrender of the Shôgun's partisans.

In the early stage of the contention, both parties looked abroad for aid, mainly for the supply of arms and ammunition. Though officially neutral, the British Minister was in favour of the Imperial cause, of which Satsuma and Chôshû were the staunchest protagonists, while the French Minister, under instructions from Louis Napoleon, was inclined to help the Tokugawa side. Asiatic history teems with examples of foreign aid in internal feuds and of its fatal effect. The Japanese were not familiar with these examples, but the least inkling of an alien shadow would draw the bitterest opponents close together. They perceived at once the White Peril, hanging like the sword of Damocles over their heads. Once again did the ominous presence of European Powers serve a catalytic purpose in bringing out of an amorphous mass a crystallized State.

Thus the issues regarding the opening of relations with the Western Powers precipitated the downfall of the Shôgunate system, upon which doubts had been cast by scholars, and of which the sinews, moral, financial and military, had—as already explained—been steadily weakening.

In the midst of intense excitement and confusion, the Emperor Kômei, still in the prime of manhood, was stricken with small-pox and died, in 1868, to be succeeded by his son, a youth of sixteen. It is from this year that the Japanese date their history as the beginning of New Japan.

## CHAPTER III

### EMERGENCE OF NEW JAPAN

"Was, and is, and will be, are but is."—TENNYSON.

#### I. GENERAL FEATURES OF THE NEW REGIME

THE presence of foreigners at our doors, or rather within our gates, was a signal for the Shôgunal and Royal parties to unite. It was also the pivotal consideration in framing every detail of the new regimen. Everything depended on the question, how to deal with the foreigner—whether to get rid of him or to accommodate him—how to equal or surpass him—what to learn from him or ultimately to teach him.

Scholars even pointed to the olden pre-seclusion days as more truly characteristic of the nation than "the policy of expelling barbarians from the sacred soil," which had been the cry only a few years previously. One of the first duties of the Emperor was to announce, early in February 1868, that Japan would henceforth take up intercourse with the rest of the world in accordance with the rules of international law, and that he would later (a few days later) receive foreign representatives in audience. But not so easily could the fanatics be converted. Ordinances had to be issued and severe punishments meted out for anti-alien acts before the country could be safe for foreigners to reside in.

This sudden change of attitude toward foreigners was but one side of the henotic policy pursued in the



national transformation. It was a bold compromise—compromise without which, as Morley has pointed out, no political action is possible. In confronting an alien Power, it was absolutely necessary to present a united front. It had been seen how Western Governments treated the lords of Satsuma and Chôshû as independent of the central authority in Yedo. Feudalism meant *imperium in imperio*, and unless the feudal lords were divested of their fiefs and of their retainers, the *samurai*—of whom there were over 260,000 families, numbering about 1,020,000 men and women, throughout the country—there could be no real unity within. The Taihō reform, nationalizing both land and men, had to be, as it were, re-enacted.

Few acts of the new Government demonstrated fidelity to the imperial cause better than that of the elevation of the Emperor to a dignity commensurate with his restored status—without raising him, as was so often done in the East, above the condition of mortals. His civil list was greatly enlarged, and he was provided with a well-disciplined body-guard. Some of the best men, known for their high character and learning, were appointed to give dignity to his entourage. Kyôto was too closely associated with “the Son of Heaven”—held too sacrosanct for human eyes to behold—and too detached from the practical work of governance, to be an effective place for the Capital of the new era. It was deemed wise to free the imperial ruler from the dwarfing traditions attached to Kyôto. Hence the Court was removed to Yedo, thereafter to be called Tokyo, the Eastern Capital, to distinguish it from Kyôto, or Saikyo, the Western Capital.

Yedo (Tokyo) had, in the course of two and a half centuries, grown from a small town to a Capital

with 1,500,000 people. During the latter part of the Shôgunate it was the political, social and intellectual centre of the country. It was the policy of the Tokugawa to absorb the wealth and talents of the whole country in this flat and expansive region. The compulsory bi-annual visit of the *daimyos*, to pay respect to the Shôgun at his palace, brought in thousands of idle people and millions of treasure. It was here that the country *samurai* indulged in all sorts of excesses. It was here also that the artists sought their Mæcenæ. It was here that was set the fashion in manner and language. It was here that buildings were found large enough to accommodate public offices created by the new Government. But, above these material conveniences, there also loomed the conviction that orders issued from Tokyo would receive from the people, long accustomed to be ruled from that place, a more hearty obedience.

The principle of centralization necessitated the reform of local government. As we have seen, for a short time the geographical limits of the old feudatories were left intact, with their lords nominally as prefects. That meant splitting the country into nearly 300 prefectures of all sizes, some of them comprising little more than a small town or a few large villages. Both economy and efficiency, but, above all, the urgent call for centralization, demanded a more equal partition. Hence, in 1871, the country was divided into seventy-five prefectures, with governors appointed and sent by the central Government. Exceptions were made for the northern island of Yezo and the southern archipelago of Ryukyu (Loo-choo). The position of the latter was unique. The islanders were different in customs and language from the Japanese; they had paid tribute at one time

or another to China, and had a king of their own. For some decades previous to the Restoration they had definitely come under the subjection of the feudal lord of Satsuma. When, now, the foreign ships began to frequent our shores, it became imperative that their status should be more clearly defined and that their king should be drawn closer in legal relation to Japan.

Still more important than the Ryukyu isles, from the view-point of national security and integrity, was Yezo in the north, which has the same area as Scotland. Thither had frequently been coming of late Russian ships, and the large island was but sparsely populated by the Japanese. There was located a feudatory, long established in the island, entrusted with the duty of defence; but it was more interested in its large fishery than in its safety. Aroused by the sight of Russia steadily descending southward, and having its attention freshly called to the strategic importance of Yezo by the flight of the Tokugawa navy thither during the War of the Restoration, the new Government devoted no small part of its energy to developing this northern territory. A special office was created for the purpose, and migration from the more populous south was encouraged. The name Yezo (which means "Savages"), given to the island because of the presence of the Ainu, was changed to "Hokkaidô" (Northern Road), in conformity with the general system of geographical nomenclature. The need of security in the extreme ends of the Empire and of centralization in the interior, thus motivated a radical transformation of the whole system of local government.

It may be said that, in the enforcement of centralization in local administration, the Government succeeded too well, having nearly killed the small

local units, the villages. This mistake had to be corrected later on, in 1888, on the lines of the German system, which in turn was modelled on the principles of the rather inchoate but practical experience of English self-government.

## 2. ABOLITION OF THE FEUDAL SYSTEM

The Shôgun had already been persuaded to surrender his domains and troops, and now it was the turn of the feudal princes to do likewise. A few of the more prominent feudatories led the way in this work of self-abnegation by voluntarily surrendering their fiefs, with the expected result that the rest followed their example. From the day the abolition of feudalism was first talked about among the leaders in the new Government it took just two weeks to proclaim its completion (June 17th, 1869). The *daimyo* and the *samurai*, being dispossessed of their estates, from which they had received so many bushels of rice a year, were compensated by interest-bearing bonds, equal in value to one-tenth of their former incomes. In a few years these pensions were commuted, thereby imposing much hardship upon the *samurai*. This radical abolition of feudalism had cost the Government £17,000,000 sterling, besides some £1,750,000 in payment of the *daimyos'* debts, which it had assumed.

The cultivated lands which had furnished the revenue of the *daimyo* and *samurai*, now lordless, were practically turned over to the occupying cultivators, who thus became proprietors—on condition of paying a definite amount of their produce *in natura* or its equivalent in money to the national fisc, instead of to their former landlords.

The *samurai*, who had hitherto looked upon money as filthy lucre, and who had for generations

been taught to regard merchants as the lowest class in the social scale—lower even than artisans and far below agriculturists—had now to make the best use of the bonds. This, owing to sheer ignorance about business, they could not do. It did not take long for most of them to collapse, in the new economic order. As to the *daimyo*, while their income and outlay were very much greater in amount and more official in character than those of the *samurai*, they too were given for their support only 10 per cent. of their former revenues, but they were also relieved of all public expenses connected with the maintenance of law-courts and armies. They became private gentlemen, their castles, ships, mines, arms, being turned over to the State. For a couple of years after the formal abolition of the feudal system the *daimyos* were mediatized into lieutenants of the national sovereign, and received appointments from him as governors of the districts over which they had until recently been reigning as kings. This makeshift was adopted because the Government had neither money to take up all public activities at once nor experience of local conditions to cope with these. It was not without danger, however, since the relations between the so-called new governors and their former retainers could not suddenly cease to be personal and intimate and assume a purely legal and political character. But in 1871 the *daimyo* were compelled to quit their towns and reside in Tokyo, and their place was taken by appointees of the central Government, usually by disinterested men from other provinces.

### 3. RAPID AND RADICAL CHANGES

When once the stone was set rolling, it went on, crushing withering plants and old rocks on its way. The men at the helm of the State were all young—

a few of the oldest in their forties and a large number still in their twenties—inexperienced but ardent, often unpractical but daring. In the first flush of life, they were ready to play the newest game in the untrodden field. Many and fatal were the mistakes naturally committed.<sup>1</sup> One wise device then in vogue was the employment of expert foreign advisers in every branch of administration or enterprise, be it of private or public character. At one time (1872) there were over 200 of these advisers in Government employ alone, and, out of the meagre revenue of that time, they were paid a total yearly salary of £53,000. This was no paltry sum, when we remember that the whole of the State revenue amounted to but £5,200,000, out of which £3,400,000 was ear-marked for redeeming dues incumbent upon the abolition of feudalism. This left less than £2,000,000 for ordinary expenditure. This dearly bought experience taught the Japanese what to learn from abroad and what not to learn. And they learned much—nearly all that could be learned or was worth learning.

The story of the peaceful revolution of Japan in the early years of Meiji has been so often told that I need not repeat it here. A tabular view will give a concise idea of the transformation brought about. In the following list are included some changes of minor importance, but of no small psychological significance. I shall take the first decade of the Meiji era, as this was fullest of innovation—the following years being devoted to modifying or developing some of these and to eliminating others.

1868. Five Articles of Oath nuncupated.  
Buddhism and Shinto declared disparate.  
Ratio of national and foreign currency fixed.  
Roads hitherto barred by territorial lords opened for free traffic.

- Yedo named Tokyo and made Capital of the Empire.  
Emperor Meiji's coronation.
1869. Local barriers to public communication abolished.  
Kōgisho (Public Assembly) opened.  
Equality of the four social classes (*samurai*, farmer, artisans and merchants) declared.  
Restrictions on inter-feudatory trade removed.  
Visit of the Prince of Wales.  
First telegraph built.  
Ships of foreign model allowed to be built.  
Return of fiefs to the Emperor by some feudatories.  
First newspaper printed.
1870. Steamship line opened between Osaka and Tokyo.  
Primary schools begun in Tokyo.  
Western military music introduced in the army.  
An Imperial prince goes to U.S.A. for study.  
New civil code prepared.  
Vaccination encouraged.  
Kogisho indefinitely prorogued (formally abrogated 1873).
1871. Mint built in Osaka.  
Feudalism formally abolished (August 29th).  
Postal service introduced in principal cities.  
First brick house built in Tokyo.  
Treaty with Hawaii.  
Boring for petroleum tried.  
Imperial Embassy sent abroad.  
Men's hair, hitherto worn in a top-knot, permitted to be cut.  
Reform of criminal law attempted.  
Wearing of swords made optional.  
Department of Education inaugurated.  
*Samurai* forbidden to exercise any sort of pressure on lower orders.  
Social distinctions by apparel abolished.  
Marriage allowed between different social classes.  
Choice of crops to be grown made free.
1872. Salutation in erect posture acknowledged (instead of low bow).  
Paper money after Prussian pattern issued.  
Christian Church built in Yokohama.  
In Tokyo, sixteen schools established with nearly 1000 pupils for the study of Western learning.  
First brewery started.  
Compulsory educational code issued.  
First railway constructed between Yokohama and Tokyo,

- at the cost of £500,000, borrowed from England at 9 per cent. interest.  
Sunday adopted as legal holiday (for convenience only—not for religious reasons).  
First gas works in Yokohama.  
Normal school opened.  
Choice of trades and professions declared free.  
Bank Act issued.  
Court dress of European pattern adopted.
1873. Gregorian calendar adopted.  
Boards placarding the prohibition of Christianity taken down.  
Coiffure of their Majesties changed.  
Foreign Language School opened by Government.  
First Bank begins business.  
Land tax revised and made uniform.  
Embassy returns from abroad.  
First glass factory founded.  
Geological survey begun by Dr. Lyman.  
Conscription Law issued.  
Revision of penal code begun (put into effect in 1882).
1874. Petition for the opening of Parliament.  
Political party first formed.  
Formosan expedition on account of aborigines killing Japanese fishermen.  
Public speaking commenced by Fukusawa.  
Woman's Normal School opened by Government.  
Government School of English Language opened.  
Cigars and cigarettes manufactured for first time.
1875. Gas lighting in Tokyo.  
Senate and Supreme Court instituted.  
Meeting of Prefectural governors convened.  
Saghalien exchanged for the Kuriles.  
Meteorological Observatory built in Tokyo.
1876. Treaty with Korea signed, opening that country to the world.  
Wearing of swords prohibited.  
Schools of Western learning greatly increased.  
Emperor's journey in the North-East provinces.  
First agricultural college established at Sapporo, with American staff.  
First kindergarten started.
1877. Saigo Rebellion.  
Philanthropic Society, later called Red Cross Society, organized.



Japan joins Universal Postal Union.

First national exposition opened.

Peers' School started.

First telephone used.

#### 4. REFORM IN THE JUDICIARY SYSTEM

The most cursory glance at the list of changes inaugurated, if not all completed, in the first decade—and especially the number of those included in the years 1871-73—will show the transforming spirit which permeated all spheres of public activity, be it in political machinery, economic institutions, educational organizations, social customs, modes of living, and even ways of thinking. We shall take more or less at haphazard a few typical examples of the changes, with the view of revealing the inner motives that prompted them.

As we shall consider later more fully, Japan was reiterating the same process by which she recast herself in the Taika and Taiho eras. It will be remembered that the reforms effected at that remote epoch were copied *in toto* from an advanced Chinese model, and were the first attempt at the foundation of a jural state. These laws had gone out of use with the progress of feudalism, and were replaced from time to time by others less elaborate but more effective, less theoretical but more practical. The so-called Jōei laws of 1232 were almost exclusively for the *samurai*. If this order remained sound, the common people would be governed with justice founded on common sense and common laws. Under the Tokugawas, a code of what are known as "One Hundred Articles for the *Samurai*" was compiled, covering what was required of them to do and what not to do. But the rights of the people were not protected in a degree sufficient to entitle the country to be called a jural state.

With the new era, when the *daimyo* were media-tized and *samuraihood* was practically abolished, and when "the high and the low" were together called to work in and for national advancement, new codes were an urgent necessity. A mere revival of an ancient code would not suffice. The modern conception of the equal rights of humanity had filtered through the wall of seclusion. The leading statesmen of Meiji had been told of the American and the French Revolutions and assented to their doctrines (excepting regicide and rebellion), as being more in harmony with their own sentiments than were the ethical maxims of ancient Chinese philosophy. Confucius taught morals, but nothing of politics or law in the modern sense. An additional urge to a radical transformation in the judicial system came from the sense of wrong and disgrace which was felt on the discovery that the unequal treaties instituted a shameful discrimination against Japan.

The first treaties with Foreign Powers (1858) contained three chief objectionable clauses: (1) Consular jurisdiction implying extra-territoriality, (2) one-sided right of fixing low customs tariff, denying Japan the right of tariff autonomy, (3) no mention of the duration of treaties and hence no period set for revision. It took some years for the inexperienced diplomats of the country to find that these implied its own assent to its inferiority in the family of nations, and it took forty laborious years (1858-99) to undo their work. The repeated requests made by Japan for revision of the treaty, with the view of putting an end to these offensive provisions, invariably met with rebuff, chiefly on the ground of the severity of her legal punishments. This gave the strongest impetus to the speedy reform

of old criminal laws and procedure. The first attempt at this reform was rather hastily made in 1871, but it had very little in common with the fundamental principles of European legislation. Two years later a second effort was made, under the guidance of a French jurist, Monsieur Boissonade, and the committee working under his direction continued the study, with the result that a revised penal code came into effect early in 1882. It was too French for the English-speaking countries to agree to at once, yet no Englishman would have refused to come under French law in France! None the less did the foreign Governments insist upon the imperfections in Japanese administration of justice, as their reason for refusing to abandon extra-territoriality. This time objection was made regarding the civil code, which had been under process of preparation ever since 1875. In ten years the progress was so evident that in the Treaty Revision Conference, in which no less than eighteen Governments participated, there were visible signs of their relaxing. With Japan's acceptance of a "mixed court" in cases where foreigners were defendants, revision would have been possible. The United States had, as early as 1876, given a friendly gesture by concluding a new treaty; but as it contained a clause making it a condition that its operation should begin as soon as similar treaties were concluded with other Powers, it amounted to nothing. Rather than resort to a makeshift arrangement, Japan continued her legal reforms. In 1890 the parts dealing with persons and property were completed and promulgated. Though in the beginning they showed a strong French tendency, as time went on the influence of German jurisprudence prevailed, this being due to the general fostering of German

science and German ideas during the early eighties. In 1890 the civil code was taken in hand by a committee of jurists appointed by the Government, but not until eight years later was it put in force, a number of modifications having been made in the interval, in order to bring some of its provisions more into harmony with native customs and conditions. The code of civil procedure followed in 1892. Eighteen years were occupied in the codification of commercial laws, which were made effective in 1899. In many respects it was too advanced, and subsequent alterations were found necessary. All these various codes were subjected to frequent revisions, in order to bring them up to the highest standard of legal theories without divorcing them from the traditions and usages of the nation.

When we look back on the judicial development of New Japan, we notice at once that Western ideas of jurisprudence are strongly in evidence, but in no wise so glaringly and so indiscreetly as were those of China in the Taihō codes. We also notice that the difficulties of our foreign relations—foreign citizens enjoying the protection of our laws and still denying the laws any power to adjudge them, and our candid admission of the imperfections of our own laws—were the immediate reasons for the persistent endeavour made to reconstruct the whole juridical system of the country. Our emulation of the West was to convince it of our deserts, and to convert it to the idea of equality between the West and the East.

The Occidentalization of the country has often been ascribed to vain and idle mimicry, and it is but little understood that it was actuated by our ambition to run abreast with the most advanced nations of the West in social and political institu-

tions. As to the more imponderable factors of human progress—the spiritual and moral—our people do not deem themselves one jot inferior. It may be observed that the tardy recognition by Western Powers of Japan's self-improvement was due to the peaceful means she took to demonstrate it. It seems that the Occident cannot discern cultural progress—at least in the case of an Eastern people—unless it assumes a form of force, of violence. Only the war with China, and subsequently that with Russia, convinced the West that we had achieved any progress. The modern Chinese, knowing Western mentality better, make a short cut to recognition by two methods which the Japanese have not mastered—namely, propaganda and a resort to violence, apparently a labour-and-time-saving course, and we must grant the palm to our neighbours for their sagacity.

But to the slow-thinking and slow-moving generation of the early Meiji days, the cautious method adopted by their statesmen was too fast.

Other innovations which followed one after another in uninterrupted succession could scarcely all succeed without mistakes, opposition and criticism. The mistakes consisted in the too close imitation of Western institutions. The opposition came from the more conservatively minded, among whom there were men of all degrees of intelligence, varying from ignorant prejudice to inordinate national self-conceit. The critics were among the more discerning admirers of Western civilization, who had too much discretion to follow it blindly, and among reasonable Conservatives, who were not favourably inclined to the iconoclasm of the advocates of progress.

## 5. REFORM IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Let me briefly describe another example of the course pursued to put our house in order before we could claim equality with the West.

Just as the first educational institutions for the introduction and spread of Chinese learning were organized by the Taika and Taihō laws, so was instruction in Western sciences and arts the first step taken by the Meiji Government. A narrow opening had been made for this by the Dutch in Deshima, whither were attracted some aspiring youths, to study in secret Western sciences, particularly Medicine, Tactics and Physics. As early as 1871, the Department of Instruction was instituted. This issued in the next year a Code of Education modelled on the French system. It framed a beautiful scheme for dividing the country into educational areas, in each of which was to be established a university and a certain number of secondary and elementary schools, besides institutions with special curricula, such as normal and technical studies. The Emperor's Rescript encouraging education was couched in these words: "Henceforth education shall be so diffused that there shall be no ignorant family in the land, and no family with an ignorant member." Though the educational authorities could not bring about this high standard, as early as 1872 they made public the Compulsory Education Act, which was amended and put into full execution in 1876. We can but admire the audacity and earnestness with which the authorities tried to carry out this Act in its early days. There was no text-book, no teaching staff. Moreover, the public was not in an appreciative mood. It is incredible nowadays, when the State and local public bodies ungrudgingly pay

15 per cent. of their total annual expenditure for school purposes, that the Act should, in more than one place, have evoked popular uprisings. The rural inhabitants of the districts did not approve of local taxes for schools. Not a few looked upon education as a luxury, and even as something positively detrimental to industrious habits. But fortunately it did not take long, even for the peasantry, to discover that schooling did pay, and in the following generation the thirst for more education became almost a mania.

Perhaps no people on the face of the earth are more amenable to pedagogical influences than are the Japanese. Long accustomed to submission to authority and to look up to teachers as incarnations of wisdom, the youthful mind could be moulded as desired by them. What, then, was the mould? In the seventies, when the Charter Oath was still fresh in the minds of the statesmen and the public, the aim of education was conceived in a liberal spirit. "Knowledge shall be sought throughout the world." Hence there was no hesitation on the part of educators to stress the importance of the acquisition of foreign languages and of Western history. English reading-books were abundantly supplied in schools. There was a time when knowledge meant a smattering of the English language. To an ordinary common-sense citizen, the new education afforded endless amusement, on account of its superficiality and superciliousness. But from the wider and higher point of view of national regeneration, what a far cry from the time when learning was a chartered privilege of "the sons of the fifth rank and upward."

The framers of the Education Act had in mind the training of the young for democracy, or else why did they choose French and American systems

as a pattern? This is not saying that they were striving for a republic. Nothing of the sort! The Charter Oath plainly said: "Knowledge shall be sought throughout the world to greatly rear the foundation of the Empire." Thus is clearly affirmed the object in seeking knowledge. Knowledge was not to be sought for its own sake, but for a patriotic purpose. At the same time, the Oath posited the doctrine that patriotism is not to be blind passion, but to be based on universal knowledge. How faithfully the spirit of the Oath has been followed will be seen from the rapid increase in the number of schools established in the country. There were 12,000, mostly small, in 1873, 20,000 in the next year, and 28,000 in 1879. Since then the number has been somewhat decreased, due to amalgamation of microscopic groups, so that to-day there are about 25,600 schools, in which are nearly 10,000,000 children; but to the present condition of education we shall devote a special chapter.

As far as numbers and material equipment are concerned, Japan has achieved wonders in the history of pedagogy. But, respecting the imponderable result of instruction, particularly in the moral sphere, it has proved far from what was expected. As has been said, in the early seventies, Liberal ideas prevailed. The manner in which these were manifested was not always wise or prudent. It was often most decidedly stupid, being only a poor copy of an imported article. In the eighties, doubt began to be cast upon the policy of imitation. Doubt very soon ripened into anti-foreign reaction, which, however, never took the form of boycott or violence. Public opinion shifted from time to time with the changing phases of foreign relations, and the Government either led or else followed it. Did the emotion



of nationalism reach the crest of the wave, the State would cater for it by insisting on the nationalistic side of instruction. Did Liberalism show signs of revival, the authorities would slacken their bureaucratic hold. On the whole, for the last forty years, though education has made great strides in its technical aspects, it has become narrower and narrower in the conception of its ideal aim. This is best seen in its entire neglect of disseminating political knowledge among the rising generation. It is also manifest in the ethical goal prescribed by the school curriculum, which, in the case of boys, is made to consist in Loyalty and Patriotism, and in that of girls, in being a "Good Wife and Wise Mother." No appeal to Personality was ever made. Scarcely anything was taught, except *en passant*, of man's duties to himself, of his everyday behaviour to his neighbour, of his responsibility as a citizen of a constitutional country. Religion received no encouragement. International subjects were carefully avoided, for fear they might beguile pupils from the narrow path of patriotism. Even the mention of politics was shunned in the schoolroom, as though it were contaminating. Enough has been reviewed regarding the educational system begun in the Meiji era, and the sort of fruit it was destined to bear. It aimed at reassuring the collective spirit, at the cost of individuality; at moulding nationalism out of localism.

## 6. MORAL IMPULSE IN THE TRANSFORMATION

We have taken the new systems of jurisprudence and of education as representative types of the general changes introduced in consequence of the opening of the country to foreign intercourse. We could have taken other examples—of military or

naval organization, of civil service, or of banks and other financial and business institutions—to illustrate the same motive and spirit; the same method and sort of mistakes committed; the same process of adjustment to the temperament of the nation and to the needs of the times, and the occasional reactions, large and small, according to the character of the subject-matter.

The many-sided transformation was watched with astonishment and incredulity by Western onlookers, and with disdain and suspicion by Eastern peoples. The crisis that decides the fate of nations and demands quick action calls forth psychological elements difficult to be detected by foreigners. The moment to strike is known instinctively only by those on the spot. The contingents and conjunctures are hardly likely to touch an alien chord, but are perceived by native genius. The power of mind that most aids in the decision is Perception—a power not wanting in the Japanese race, as we have noted elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> Perception is not always an infallible guide. It can err, but the instant it does so, it perceives its own error. Other powers of mind than Perception come instantly into play to rectify the error, but they steer their course under its guidance. As the blind man, suddenly cured of his infirmity, first saw “men as trees walking,” and required to be wholly restored before seeing “every man clearly,” so did the leaders of New Japan, rudely awakened to the sight of the world, fail to see at once everything in the right perspective. They snatched often at non-essentials, taking men for trees, and trees for men. Their evaluation of Western civilization was not always correct. All

<sup>1</sup> See the author's *Japanese Traits and Foreign Influences* (London), chap. ii.

the credit that the Japanese can claim for themselves is—that the errors were fewer than might have been expected from the untoward circumstances of the age. Think of a Renaissance, a Reformation, an Industrial Upheaval and a French Revolution that came over the Island Empire all at once. Of these the Renaissance furnishes the best parallel, as the very word "*Fukkô*"—Return to Antiquity, Revival—suggests. The Meiji Revolution was not solely a political event. *Au fond* it was intellectual and emotional, and, as such, its resources are as yet by no means exhausted. The mission of the Meiji era is not ended. The pregnant words of Walter Pater, with slight changes in the dates, describe exactly the inner character of "*Ishin*." Says he: "The Renaissance of the fifteenth century was, in many things, great rather by what it designed than by what it achieved. Much which it aspired to do, and did but imperfectly or mistakenly, was accomplished in what is called the *éclaircissement* of the eighteenth century, or in our own generation; and what really belongs to the revival of the fifteenth century is but the leading instinct, the curiosity, the initiatory idea."

Put in place of "the fifteenth century" the Meiji era, and of "the eighteenth," the present Showa period, and the parallel is exact. Without the knowledge of race psychology, New Japan is an insoluble enigma. Strange that a nation could show any sign of virility after a lapse of over eight generations of enervating tranquillity, any appreciation of exotic culture after such a long period of seclusion, any *esprit de corps* after seven centuries of disruptive feudalism!

It was fortunate for the country that there existed at the time a social class which combined mental

and physical training, the virtues of the gentleman and of the soldier—a class possessed of both the power and the ability to govern. To be sure it had lost much of its pristine energy and well-earned prestige, but the old fire was not totally quenched. It was the class of social leaders whom Mr. H. G. Wells evidently has in view when he describes their training in *Modern Utopia*, and whom he calls *the samurai*. The presence of this two-sworded class, among whom Honour was the highest aim in life and on whose lips floated the words, "Life is as light as a feather, but Rectitude as weighty as a mountain," explains the facility with which the old order gave place to the new, without the cruelties of the French Revolution or the lingering throes of the Chinese. A sense of rectitude which required sacrifices on their part—that was the starting-point and the root of all the reforms which transformed Japan from a worn-out feudal aristocracy to a new juridical State. In the study of the individuals who took an active part in this transformation, one will come across some dark pages, smirched or illegible, but, taken all in all, the key-note of the Ishin is the moral attitude assumed by the nation, primarily by the *samurai*, towards the King and the Country—Loyalty and Patriotism. The nation is still largely impelled by sentiment rather than by reason. Even in her relations with other nations, cold calculation, a book-keeping mentality, does not move her as much as the emotions of righteous indignation or legitimate vengeance.

Let us see how national characteristics showed themselves in her foreign relations.

## 7. THE KOREAN QUESTION

We have observed what entangling relations Japan had with Korea in the early days of our history. The sun of Japan set and rose, and rose and set, on the peninsular Kingdom, according as her prosperity at home allowed her enterprises abroad. A scientific historian may one day find her Korean plan an index of the ebb and flow of her power. The most signal but indecisive attempt at the conquest was made by Hideyoshi. After that the peninsula was left untouched; but, even in her period of hibernation, Japan never entirely forgot that Korea was for a time her vassal state. A tenacious memory may be called a racial characteristic of the Japanese people, and a wrong or an affront once inflicted upon her lodges and rankles in her breast for decades and centuries.

Though Japan's early adventures in the peninsula can scarcely be called an unqualified success, her claim was once so well established that the cessation, after 1811, of the periodical tribute by Korea was considered an act of defiance. Hence, as soon as the internal affairs of the country were in a large measure settled in the early seventies, and while there was still left among the *samurai* a spirit and pride which were denied any vent at home, the question of sending a punitive expedition to Korea was brought to the fore. The war party demanded that she should be punished for her neglect of the tribute, which, however insignificant in amount, had been a mark of her recognition of Japan's suzerainty. The peace party argued that the internal condition of Japan herself was as yet by no means settled, still far below the level of Western lands, and that all efforts must be concentrated upon further internal

reforms. A violent discussion between the two parties resulted, in 1872, in an ominous split in the Government. This time the peace party won, greatly to the dismay and chagrin of its opponents, who later felt constrained to resort to force, in order to assert their opinion. The so-called Satsuma Rebellion of 1877, and lesser uprisings which had preceded it, were the consequence of this dissension.

In the meantime, Korea had succumbed to Chinese influence, and later, in the latter part of the nineteenth century, she fell a prey to Russian intrigue. Insinuating tactics, combined with a free use of money by the Czar's agents, more than counter-balanced the threat and the stiff diplomacy of Japan. Thus was looming above the horizon of Far Eastern politics a formidable danger. Korea in the hands of China was bad enough; but in the hands of Russia it would be a positive menace to Japan. Look at the map, and see how the peninsula protrudes to the south-east, with its point directed towards the very heart of the Empire. Russia knew this. Geography is one of the sciences best developed in that country, and, steadily, in the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, she had pushed her frontiers eastward. Then, after acquiring from China the Amur and the Ussuri regions, she had marched southward. Her "manifest destiny," to borrow a pet American phrase, was to incorporate Korea and then to pierce Japan in the eastern seas, as surely as it was her determination to descend upon long-coveted India on the continent. The crisis was fast approaching, and impotent Korea, whose officials were deaf to any other sound than the clinking of gold, went on playing with Russia and China. It was most inopportune that, just at that time, Korea was practi-

cally in the clutches of the ex-King Tai Won Kun, who, in his abhorrence of anything Western, despised Japan as a traitor to the traditions of the East and a cat's-paw of Western Powers. More and more did he commit himself to Chinese hands. When Japan found that all her advances were repulsed by the Hermit Kingdom, with the support of China, she approached the Government of Peking, in 1873, with a query as to the status of Korea, and was answered that, though it was a vassal state, it was given full power to make war or peace on its own account. During the next three years, more than one attempt was made to open negotiations. But neither threat nor cajolery availed. In the meantime Russia was stretching her long arms over the peninsula. At last, early in 1876, Japan's efforts were crowned with success, and a treaty of commerce was signed which served as a precedent for the rest of the world to follow. It is worthy of note that in the supplementary treaty of the same was inserted a provision prohibiting the importation of opium into Korea, an example which was followed by Great Britain in a convention signed in 1882.

But treaties rarely change the temper of signatories. The Conservative element in the peninsula continued its intrigues in the Court and agitations in the open. Long accustomed to work in holes and corners, always preventing the light of day from shining on their doings, the ex-King's creatures manœuvred the affairs of the kingdom by the agency of hired assassins, incendiaries and mobs. As they were clandestinely backed by China, their opponent, the Reform party, naturally turned to Japan for succour and sympathy. It became an open secret that either China or Japan must guide Korea, and that, if neither could, the third party, Russia, would take

their place. It was obvious that Korea could not save herself.

The strained relations between the two rival candidates for supremacy in the Kingdom gave rise to repeated attacks on the Japanese legation, and were only put an end to by the Treaty of Tientsin in 1885, a treaty between China and Japan, by which they both recognized the independence of Korea and agreed to withdraw their troops—on the understanding that, in case the presence in Korea of the troops of either contracting Power was deemed indispensable, the one should give to the other, in writing, previous notice of its intention to re-enter that country.

#### 8. THE WAR WITH CHINA

Repeated provocations in 1873, 1882 and 1884, for Japan to appeal to arms for the settlement of her relations with Korea, were passed over in patience, much to the dissatisfaction of those who, for decades, had advocated war as the only way by which Korea could be brought to her senses. Not for altruistic reasons, but for the sake of her own national safety, Japan desired Korea to have a strong and stable government. It has before been stated that the position of that kingdom in relation to Japan is like that of Belgium to Great Britain. To an American, a better parallel will be found in the relation of Cuba to the United States—with this difference, that unstable Korea was politically a far more serious danger to Japan than the worst Spanish misrule in the Greater Antilles could be to her powerful northern neighbour. But the peninsular Government was rotten to the core. When Lord Curzon visited it in 1896, he found it in a condition so utterly corrupt that he wrote: "Had Japan



been at liberty to annex the peninsula, and to treat it with her own instruments and in her own way, she might in time have evolved a new order out of the existing chaos. But this she has been prevented from doing by her own pledges, and by the fear of others. She has cut the single cable by which the crazy little ship rode precariously at anchor in the Far Eastern roadstead; and she has left it to drift, without helmsman and without rudder, upon the stormy waters." <sup>1</sup> This was fourteen years before Japan annexed Korea. The decrepit nation was placed between two raging elements—storms from without threatening to ravage it, and the deep beneath yawning to swallow it. It was letting itself drift to either fate or to both. So in 1893, and again in the following year, there arose a rebellion of the Tong Haks, a reactionary band of fanatics, opposed to progress and to change of any kind. At the request of the Chinese Resident, Li Hung Chang sent troops to Korea and notified the Japanese Government of the action taken, according to the terms of the Tientsin Treaty. In his notice to Japan, Li Hung Chang stated the object to be the restoration "of the peace of our tributary state." Now it had been previously declared more than once that China recognized the independence of Korea. But time was too pressing for verbal argument. Japan replied by dispatching troops. When, in a few weeks, the Tong Haks were subdued and order was restored, Japan proposed to China that the two Empires should join in setting Korea on a securer footing—financially and politically. To this China refused to accede, this time on the ground that Korea was an independent and sovereign State. But as Korea's weakness jeopardized the very

<sup>1</sup> Curzon, *Problems of the Far East* (New Edition), p. 383.

existence of Japan, she proceeded, on her own responsibility, to introduce reforms in administration, without impairing the independent status of the country. China, finding herself powerless to oppose Japan, resorted to her usual method of pitting one State against another. She called on England, Russia and the United States to interfere in Japan's action, and, failing in this, she attempted to obstruct Japan—with the result that in July 1894 the two Powers confronted each other on the battlefield. It was to be a conflict between an insular pygmy and a continental giant. It was to be a duel between Oriental conservatism and Occidental progress. The old drama of Greece against Persia was to be re-enacted. The war lasted scarcely 230 days. During this time Japan paid a toll of about 1000 killed and 5000 wounded, with 17,000 deaths from sickness. She spent £20,000,000 in money. China lost a total of nearly 28,000 men. On the 17th of April, 1895, a treaty of peace was signed at Shimonoseki, according to which (1) the independence of Korea was recognized; (2) an indemnity of 200,000,000 taels was pledged by China; (3) the island of Formosa and the peninsula of Liaotung were ceded to Japan, and (4) four new ports were to be opened for trade and navigation.

#### 9. INTERVENTION BY THREE POWERS

During the war Western nations watched every turn of events with keen interest. The prevailing opinion among them was that Japan would be successful at the beginning, but that, ultimately, she would have to succumb to the enormous mass of man-power and the material resources of the continent. The English-speaking nations looked upon the Japanese as the vanguard of their culture,

and showed decided sympathy for them. Russia, naturally, was not pleased with the results of the struggle, and showed signs of restlessness by suddenly doubling her naval strength in the Far East. France would think as Russia would have her think. The attitude of Germany was that of a teacher looking on the pupil she had trained, to see put into practice the lessons taught.

The ink in which the Shimonoseki Treaty was written was hardly dry, when Russia, France and Germany sent, on the 23rd of April, a joint note, by which, as the wording ran, "they would give a new proof of their sincere friendship for the Government of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan by advising him to renounce the definite possession of the Peninsula of Liaotung." How could Japan defend herself from her friends? A decade or two later, when they became her enemies, she did defend herself. If the good advice had come from Russia alone or with France at her heels, it would not have been so surprising. It was no secret that France had large savings invested in Russia—"Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." But why Germany, a friendly Power? Was it that she wished Russia to concentrate her watch on the western frontier? Was it that the Kaiser would ingratiate himself with the Czar or with China? Whatever the reason, her perfidy only called forth from the Japanese the despairing utterance, "Et tu, Brute!" However, the wound was not fatal, and she learned later that professed friendship does not spell sincerity in the language of diplomacy. The British Government, which had washed its hands of this complot, satisfied its conscience by giving the somewhat ambiguous advice to make to "the susceptibilities of Europe all

concessions compatible with Japan's dignity and permanent interests."

Short as the war had been, Japan had now neither ally nor resources with which to begin fighting with three European Powers, and that scarcely a half-week after the treaty was ratified. The above entirely unexpected procedure on the part of the three Powers was only to be accepted with as good grace as could then be assumed. The resentment felt was too deep for words or tears. The nation would never raise a howl to be heard abroad, nor would she ask for outside aid in any form. Bitter as was the disappointment, the "friendly advice" was not without its lesson. It showed clearly where future foes were lurking. These "friendly" advisers taught Japan that only in armament lay security. They taught also a higher lesson—namely, resignation and patient waiting for the fulness of time. Nemesis was not slow in her awards—except to France, the weakest and the least responsible. If Japan was deprived of the fruit of her victory, what did China gain by the "friendly" act of these Powers? Poor China!

Russia, having posed as a friend of China by redeeming from her victor the Liaotung province, now arranged a treaty of defensive alliance with China *vis-à-vis* Japan, and by that treaty extorted from her the privilege of building a railway through a part of Northern Manchuria, with its terminus at Vladivostok. She further placed China under obligation by raising a loan to pay off the Japanese indemnity. The loan, raised in Paris, furnished an example for other Powers to emulate by establishing a financial protectorate over the Celestial Kingdom.

Russian manœuvres extended to Korea. Japan was well aware of these, but she could rival Russia

neither in talents representing her in Seoul nor in treasures lavished upon that Kingdom as bribes. Some hot-headed Japanese, in their blind eagerness to rescue the Korean Court from Russia's clutch, committed atrocities which naturally drove it more and more into Russian hands. While Japanese diplomacy was bungling and blundering, the Western Powers, now thoroughly convinced of the utter weakness of China, took advantage of this by demanding concessions of various kinds. Two German missionaries were murdered by a mob in the province of Shantung. "The blood of missionaries is the seed of the Empire." Germany demanded (March 6, 1898), as compensation, the lease of the harbour of Kiaochow for ninety-nine years, with the right of building railways and working the coal mines of the province. France asked and obtained, April 5, 1898, as a reward for following Germany and Russia, a lease and a concession south of Kwang Chow Bay.

It was about this time that the partition of China was in the air, and the Powers mapped out each for itself its "sphere of influence." Russia, the most interested of them, was by no means behind the rest in obtaining concessions. Port Arthur and Talienwan were leased to Russia for twenty-five years (March 24, 1898). In the former place she built an impregnable fortress, and in the latter a great commercial port—Dairen (christened Dalny by Russians)—on a scale sufficient to defy any commercial rivalry in the East. Russia, with the financial aid of France, left but little leeway to a small, poor country like Japan.

In this general scramble for the virtual disintegration of the Old Empire, Great Britain took a tardy but important part. Noticing that the Russian seizure of Port Arthur had upset the balance of

power in the Gulf of Pechili, she leased Weihaiwei (May, 1898). This port she promised at the Washington Conference to return, and is now (1930) actually returning.

The only great Power that stood aloof from this vampirism was America, who, from her lofty height, pronounced the monitory principle of Open Door and Equal Opportunity. She could well afford to abide by this righteous pronouncement, as her interest in China was largely of a sentimental nature. England or Japan or Russia could have taken an equally superior attitude in matters concerning Central America or the Spanish Main.

The doctrine of Equal Opportunity had some influence in restraining the nations from cutting up China into spheres of interest, but it had scarcely any effect on Russia's policy of seizing the whole of Manchuria and of stretching her arms into Korea.

Each gale that blew from the north brought to Japan the news of her approaching doom. It was at this time (1902) that Japan's Treaty of Alliance with Great Britain was concluded. The principal objects were the maintenance of the *status quo* and general peace in the Extreme East, and that of the independence and territorial integrity of China and Korea. Though it was agreed that Japan was interested "in a peculiar degree politically as well as commercially and industrially in Korea," she had little idea at that early time of turning that Kingdom into a protectorate, much less into a possession. If only the peninsula could be turned into an effective buffer state, that would afford sufficient guarantee to Japan.

## 10. EFFECTS OF THE SINO-JAPANESE WAR

In speaking of the effects of our war with China, we must refresh our memory—lest we forget—about the spirit in which the war was conducted, and as this spirit is nowhere better expressed than in the letter addressed by Admiral Ito and Marshal Oyama to Admiral Ting, who led the last remnant of the Chinese navy, a somewhat lengthy extract may be excused.<sup>1</sup> It was dated the 25th day of January, 1895.

“An unfortunate turn of events has made us enemies; but as the warfare of to-day does not imply animosity between each and all individuals, we hope our former friendship is still warm enough to assure Your Excellency that these lines, which we address to you with your kind permission, are dictated by a motive higher than that of a mere challenge to surrender. This motive is that of submitting to the calm consideration of a friend a reason for an action which seems to be truly conducive to the good of his country and of himself, although stress of circumstances might temporarily conceal this from him. To whatever cause the successive failures of Chinese arms on both sea and land may be attributed, we think Your Excellency's sound judgment will not fail in assigning them to their true cause, which must be apparent to any unprejudiced observer. In China the literary class is still the governing section, and literary accomplishment is the chief if not the sole way to rank and power now as it was a thousand years ago. We do not venture to deny that this system is excellent in itself, and might well be permanent and sufficient if China were to stand alone in the world. But national isolation is no longer a possibility. Your Excellency must know what a hard experience the Japanese empire had thirty years ago, and how narrowly she escaped the awful calamity which threatened. To throw away the old principle and to adopt the new, as the sole condition of preserving the integrity of your empire, is as necessary with your Government now as it was with ours. The necessity must be attended to, or fall is inevitable sooner or later. That the crisis is being brought about by the Japanese arms is mere chance. It might

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<sup>1</sup> See Takahashi, *Cases on International Law during the Chino-Japanese War*, 1899, pp. 124-126.

have been caused by other political difficulties, which are equally destructive. Now at such a juncture, is it the part of a truly patriotic man, upon whom the necessity of action devolves, to allow himself to be simply dragged along by force of circumstances? Compared with the re-establishment on a sound working basis of the oldest empire in the world, with its extensive territories, what is the surrender of a fleet or the loss of a whole army? If Your Excellency be truly patriotic and loyal to the cause of your country, we beg you to listen to the words of sympathetic friends filled with the sense of honour representative of the fighting men of Japan; words which ask you to come and stay in Japan until the time arrives when your services shall be required for the good cause. Not to speak of the numerous instances of final success after temporary humiliation in your own history of the ancient dynasties, let us call your attention to the case of the French Marshal MacMahon, who allowed himself to be detained in the enemy's land till it was expedient that he should return and aid in reforming the Government, which, instead of dishonouring him, raised him to the presidency; or to the case of Osman Pasha, whom the unfortunate event of Plevna did not prevent from subsequently filling the post of Minister of War and rendering important services in reforming the army. As to the way in which Your Excellency may be received in Japan, let us assure you of the magnanimity of our sovereign. His Majesty not only pardoned his own subjects who fought against the imperial side, but even raised them to important positions, according to their personal merits, as in the case of Admiral Enomoto, Privy Councillor Otori and others. Surely he would be more magnanimous to one who is not his own subject, and whose glorious career is so well known to the world. The great problem with Your Excellency now is whether to submit to the great calamity which must be the inevitable consequence of further adherence to the old principle, or to survive it for the sake of future reform. We know it is the custom of your officials to meet any communication from an opponent with a pride designed to show consciousness of strength or to conceal weakness, but we hope Your Excellency will understand that the present communication is not made without due consideration of the vast interests at stake, but that it is the outcome of the truest sincerity and of feelings which should lead to the realization of those interests, and we hope you will kindly consider it in that light. Should the present communication meet with your approval, the carrying out of its import will, with Your Excellency's permission, be arranged through further communications, and we have the honour to be, etc., etc."



To this no answer was received until the 12th of February. Subsequent events showed that it was Ting's intention to continue fighting till every ship of the Pei-yang Squadron was sunk and the last sailor drowned—an utter waste of life. Though, thus, the good advice and offices of the Japanese generals bore no immediate fruit, the letter shows plainly what they were really driving at. The Japanese idea—at least in those days—was to save China from the ruin of stagnation and to start her on the path of modern progress. The Japanese therefore felt a moral glow at their victories, which was not damped by the humiliation to which they were subjected by the intervention of the three Powers. Nor was this suffering temporary. It intensified and deepened patriotism. As Seneca says—"The suffering hard to bear is sweet to remember."

The moral effect of the Sino-Japanese War became apparent in our foreign relations—most apparent in paving the way for regaining judicial and tariff autonomy.

The so-called Iwakura Embassy visited the treaty Powers in 1871-72 with the ostensible object of having unequal treaties revised, but mainly to study the civilization of the Occident. Being baffled in their attempt at revision, they set to work on their return to make their country deserve the respect of other Powers. We have already seen the manifold reforms effected in every branch of administration and of social and economic life. But it took nearly a generation to accomplish this end. Only in 1899, after the war with China, were the Powers convinced that the new westernization of Japan was not a mere veneer.

A well-known authority on International Law says on this subject :—

"Not as the result of war, not by the sundering of political relations which had bound colony to mother country, not as the compromise thrown to appease international jealousy, nor even as a matter of political expediency, was the Empire of Japan admitted to the international circle, but as a recognition that a state separated far from Western nations in latitude, language and customs had won its place by the development of a worthy civilization as an equal among equals in the family of nations."<sup>1</sup>

The Sino-Japanese War was followed by a more tangible, albeit incidental, result than those mentioned above. I refer to its effect on our currency system. Mention was made of the outgo of gold, in consequence of the opening of foreign trade. The decrease in the supply of gold and the increase of State expenditure due to centralization, necessitated the issue of paper money in 1868. This was at first convertible, but, as its volume swelled year after year, it became inconvertible, with the natural consequences that prices rose, the balance of trade grew unfavourable and national securities fell. Though attempts were made to redeem the notes with silver in 1886, that metal itself had been falling in value ever since 1873. An imperial commission, appointed in 1893 to study the currency system, recommended the adoption of a gold standard, but, for want of available funds, the resolution could not be carried out, and would have remained only on paper had it not been for the Chinese indemnity. This enabled the fiscus to inaugurate the gold standard in 1897.

## II. BOXER REBELLION AND ANGLO-JAPANESE ALLIANCE

The Sino-Japanese War directed the attention of the more advanced of the Chinese to the necessity of studying Japan and the methods of Western civiliza-

<sup>1</sup> Geo. G. Wilson, "The Family of Nations Idea and Japan," in Blakeslee's *Japan and Japan-American Relations*.

tion as adopted by her, and as adapted to Oriental needs. Hordes of students flocked to Tokyo and to other cities, and the so-called "New Knowledge" was making its speedy way in Peking itself. This movement was encouraged by the Emperor Kwang Hsu, but found disfavour in the eyes of the all-powerful Empress Dowager and the Conservative coterie in the Court. These, disgruntled at the conduct of foreign Governments, were in sympathy with the reactionary anti-Western elements in the country, which appeared rather suddenly on the scene with the avowed purpose of "saving China by expelling Westerners." They called themselves "Boxers," because they believed that by the exercise of a sort of magic they could attain immunity from any harm from gun-shots or sword-cuts. The uprising took place in Peking in the summer of 1900. The Boxers besieged the legation quarter. A relief expedition, consisting of contingents of different nationalities, was landed, and soon succeeded in rescuing the beleaguered foreigners. To this expedition Japan contributed 8000 troops, Russia 4500, Britain 3000, America 2500, and France 800.

The outrageous condition lasted about four months, and was ended by the 20,000 Allied troops occupying Peking—as a matter of fact, before their appointed Commander-in-Chief, General Count Waldersee, arrived on the scene. It was early in 1901 that the Chinese Government sued for peace, and agreed, among other things, to pay an indemnity of 450,000,000 taels to the countries participating in the expedition and to punish officials connected with the rebellion. The Boxer indemnity was divided among thirteen nations, in different proportions, varying from one-tenth of 1 per cent. for Spain, Portugal and Sweden, up to 29 per cent. for Russia and Japan—the United

States receiving about 7 per cent., and England 11½ per cent.

While the Allied forces were marching on Peking, the Russian navy occupied Neuchang, a port in South Manchuria, and poured a huge army into Northern Manchuria—on the ground of its being needed for the safeguarding of the railway line.

Japanese protests against the stationing of troops both on the Yalu and in Manchuria fell on deaf ears. America and Great Britain joined in the protests, but to no avail. In 1903 a "viceroy" was appointed to administer the Amur region and Manchuria, leaving no doubt as to Russia's intentions to stay there permanently.

Russia's scheme of expansion was not confined to the Far East. It had been showing signs of activity in Persia and on the frontiers of India.

About this time England was not given much rest. In Egypt, Dervish hostilities revived. The Fashoda question nearly brought on a war with France. The tedious Boer War severely strained Great Britain's energies. Her prestige in China was not increasing. In world politics there rose two new and formidable rivals, Russia and Germany. Her statesmen broke the record of "splendid isolation," and early in 1902 the Anglo-Japanese alliance was formed—to last for five years, and to be renewed by mutual agreement. It provided for benevolent neutrality in case of attack on either of the contracting parties by a single power, and active assistance in case of attack by two or more Powers. Its scope was limited to the Far East, and forestalled a similar arrangement with Russia, which would probably have been concluded, if Great Britain had not made the contract; for, in spite of the insult and injury received at the hands of the Muscovite,

Japan could ill afford to be entirely isolated. This is as true now as it was a quarter of a century ago.

If, however, a preference had been called for as to the partner in an alliance, a large majority of the nation would have expressed itself in favour of Great Britain. Her interests on the Asiatic continent were similar to, if not identical with, those of Japan. Prince Ito was hesitant about the proposal, for he foresaw that an alliance with Great Britain implied an open breach with Russia. As the matter turned out, the alliance with Great Britain proved of immense advantage—first because of the prestige gained by Japan in having for an ally the greatest nation of the time; secondly, in securing the financial support of English bankers; thirdly, by hindering some nations from giving aid to Russia, should war be declared against that country; fourthly, in strengthening the decision of Japan to join the allies in the Great War, later. A more tangible and immediate effect of the alliance was the evacuation, partial as it was, of Manchuria by Russia.

## 12. THE RUSSO-JAPANESE STRUGGLE AND ITS RESULTS <sup>1</sup>

All the events which we have narrated as taking place in Korea and China, were but preludes to the drama History had been preparing for Japan to enact. The rupture between Russia and Japan was neither a sudden thought nor an accident. For decades the two nations had been arming in spirit. That the direct conflict had been avoided for so long, was due to the existence of the buffer states—China and Korea; but when these proved themselves so feeble and unreliable, the two aspirants for

<sup>1</sup> See Asakawa, *The Russo-Japanese Conflict*.

Asiatic hegemony had to confront each other. From the middle of the nineteenth century, Japan was aware of the approaching shade of the Muscovite peril.

As to Russia, her eastern advance was only a reversal in direction of the march of the Huns into Europe. As the latter were debarred from entering China and had to bend their way westward, so the Russians, being prevented from finding an outlet on the Mediterranean, be it by the Crimean War or by the Treaty of Berlin, cast their longing eyes on the Far East. Already, in 1860, Russia had obtained from China the territory east of the Amur, where she established the Province of Primorsk contiguous with Korea. About the same time, she built the city bearing the significant name of the Ruler of the East, Vladivostok, on the well-protected harbour of Peter the Great Bay. In 1891 was commenced the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway, which was practically completed in 1901. This great strategic iron arm was forged at an un-Russian speed of 600 kilometres per year, faster by far than the Canadian Pacific—built at the rate of 470. This arm shot forth tentacles extending to Dairen and to Port Arthur. The Czar had now nothing to fear in the Far East, which lay, as he thought, prostrate at his feet. Not so easily was the little nation to be cowed. For Japan, another war on the continent—and that with Russia—was an adventure of the first magnitude. She had been studying the giant power—a giant in resources, in man-power, and in treasures of all kinds. Her greatest hope lay in the morale of her army and navy, and in the absence of morale in the Slav. Still, she hesitated for a long time, trying to preserve peace by negotiations, even at the expense

of her pride. But it was evident that the more conciliatory the Japanese attitude grew, the more arrogantly Russia behaved. There was no other alternative for a proud people than to take the only course left. War was declared in February 1904. It was indeed a life-and-death struggle for Japan—for a second time a repetition, more serious than in the War with China, of the ancient struggle of the Athenians against the armies of Xerxes. There were strategic and tactical advantages and disadvantages on both sides. If Japan had the indirect advantage of the alliance with Great Britain and the sentimental sympathy of America, Russia enjoyed the more direct backing of Germany and France. It was even said that the Kaiser, Wilhelm II, was morally the originator of the war—in that he forced the Czar to it by underhanded manœuvrings, so that he might deal more freely with France while Russia was engaged elsewhere.

The eyes of the world were fixed upon the Manchurian arena, where 700,000 troops of both sides faced each other at Mukden in a battle-line of eighty miles. This was in the middle of March 1905. When the Russians lost, with more than double the casualties of the Japanese, General Kuropatkin, honourably admitting that he personally was principally responsible for the defeat, resigned his post, and was succeeded by Linievitch, who was not more successful than his predecessors.

While the war was going on near Mukden, the Russian Baltic fleet was proceeding on its hemispheric tour for the succour of Vladivostok. As it entered the Japan Sea, the Japanese navy, under the command of Admiral Togo, suddenly attacked the fleet. Only two ships of the Russian armada

escaped, Japanese losses being three torpedo-boats. Admiral Rozhstvenski was rescued by Japanese seamen and was made captive.

The war lasted nearly twenty months, during which popular uprisings were incessant in Russia—and her ally, France, could not come to her aid. Japan, on her part, was feeling the pinch for money and man-power. The two Empires were mentally ready for peace, when President Roosevelt urged them to take the step. Negotiations took place in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and the treaty bearing that name was signed on September 5, 1905. To enumerate the main points of the treaty: (1) recognition of Japan's suzerainty in Korea; (2) the cession of the southern half of Saghalien to Japan; (3) the transfer to Japan of the rights enjoyed by Russia in the Liaotung peninsula; (4) the payment of £4,000,000 as reimbursement for the maintenance of Russian prisoners of war; (5) the possession by Japan of interned Russian ships; (6) limitation of Russian naval power in the Far East.

Thus was Japan rewarded for the conviction she had gained, from the interference of the Three Powers, that she must arm herself and be prepared one day to confront alone the Slavic Colossus. But let it be remembered that the prestige newly won was not due only to her feat of arms. It would indeed be an injustice to the country if the victory were attributed to accoutrements only. The sanitary measures of the National Red Cross, the humane treatment of the prisoners of war, the system of communication and transportation—each and all played an important part in her final success. Final success? Victory itself was not Japan's final success in the war with Russia.

Her ultimate success lay in the acquisition of all



those rights that Russia had obtained from China in compensation for her menace to Japan. She had to fight twice for a foothold in Korea and on the continent. Shantung, which Germany acquired from China for her joint interference, was later taken back by Japanese arms and returned to China.

For the part France played in the three nations' interference after the Chinese War Nemesis is still silent. France risked her honour by violating not only the spirit, but also the letter of strict neutrality, by provisioning the Baltic fleet as it stopped first at Cherbourg and then at different ports in her African possessions—so sure was she of the victory of her ally. But she suffered in a strange way. It is needless to speak of the loss of French investments in Russian territory. When the Moroccan question was opened in March 1906, a few months after the Portsmouth Treaty was ratified, France could expect no assistance from Russia, weakened by war, in coping with the Kaiser. France reaped no great honour at the Algeciras Conference from the resignation of her great Foreign Minister, M. Delcasse—an act forced by the Kaiser.

But there were larger results accruing from the Russo-Japanese War. If some of them did not exactly follow from it, if they were events which would have occurred in any case, irrespective of the war, they could not have appeared at a better time.

In 1905, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was renewed—two years before its appointed term had ended, and extending not only its period but also widening its scope. It was now made for ten years, and its main objects were stated as: (a) the consolidation and maintenance of general peace in the regions of Eastern Asia and India; (b) the preservation of the commercial interests of all the Powers in China, by insuring

the independence and integrity of the Chinese Empire and the principle of equal opportunities for the commerce and industry of all nations in China; (c) the maintenance of the territorial rights of the contracting parties in Eastern Asia and India and the defence of their special rights in those regions. Instead of the stipulation made in the first alliance, that, in case either party should go to war with not more than a single Power, the other would preserve strict neutrality, the new instrument provided that, when either contractor was involved in war, the other contractor would at once come to the assistance of its ally. Lord Lansdowne, who signed the first convention, said that it was "purely as a measure of precaution"; but the renewed convention shows that it was clearly a defensive alliance.

An unfortunate consequence of the war with Russia was the malicious propaganda of a Yellow Peril, which, whether for reasons of policy or of conviction, seemed to have haunted the mind of Kaiser Wilhelm II. He wrote, preached and worked for this pet doctrine of his, and, through the "rep-tile fund" at his disposal, popularized the idea in America. A brown people, and that a small one, beating one of the great white nations—the idea was preposterous and the fact was ominous! Never did it enter the head of a white man that more than half of mankind had been the victim of the "White Peril." Gobineau and his school saw only the white blessing, wherever Europeans settled for conquest or business. Monsieur Le Bon had expounded the doctrine that the Japanese could never steer a gun-boat or manipulate a machine-gun in time of action. The military authorities in St. Petersburg had made a slight mistake in calculating that one Russian could outdo three Japanese. England and America,

with their practical acumen and common sense, saw on which side lay justice and courage; but even they could not escape the virus of an anti-Japanese propaganda which utilized Japan's victory as a sign of coming danger. American opinion, at first manipulated by a foreign agency, became more and more unfriendly and even hostile to Japan.

The most lamentable effect of the war with Russia is to be found in the demoralization of the national mind. "Success in war," says Sir C. Napier, "like charity in religion, covers a multitude of sins." Great victories elevate the military profession high in popular esteem. Soldiers become, as in a sense they certainly deserve to become, the chief benefactors of the nation, the protectors of the realm and the guardians of its honour. Militaristic ideas flow into every channel of the nation's life. Tin soldiers become the favourite toy of children. Young lieutenants are sought in love. The voice of an old General decides the policy of the Government. Military and militant ideas invade the domain of civil polity. The word of Bernhardt and Treitschke that "war is the extension of diplomacy," is accepted as a doctrine. Even the least martial of occupations—the trader's and the farmer's—come to be viewed from a militaristic angle. There is nothing so demoralizing as a war spirit. "War suspends the rules of moral obligation," says Burke, "and what is long suspended is in danger of being totally abrogated."

Most happily for Japan, before her war mentality reached its climax the Great War took place. This was to her of far greater consequence economically than politically—of moral rather than of warlike significance. Of these results of the war we shall speak elsewhere, later on.

### 13. JAPAN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE WORLD WAR

Notwithstanding the fact that Japan was an active member of the Allied and Associated Powers in the Great War, that stupendous conflict is treated by her more as a European event than as a world affair. The newspapers refer to it as such. The general public consider themselves not as a belligerent party, but as a detached onlooker. The country never forgot the perfidious part which Germany, together with France and Russia, played after our war with China, but the admiration—stimulated more or less artificially by State functionaries and German-bred professors and army officers—for the autocratic Kaiser, the efficient administration, the police system, and the scientific and industrial progress of the "Fatherland," had all combined to dull the resentment entertained by the Japanese for her unfriendly deed. Hence, at the outbreak of the War, there was no small sympathy for Germany, nor was this concealed. If a popular referendum had then been taken, or if the military clique could have had its own way, it is doubtful whether Japan would so promptly have cast in her lot with the Allied States.

Or, suppose the nation to have been emotionally set against Germany, cold calculation would have favoured neutrality in a struggle which concerned her so slightly. She was not a party to the treaty assuring Belgian neutrality. She was not such an ardent champion of democracy as to take up the sword in order to make the world safe for it. If she had to fight the White Peril in Asia, as represented by Germany, she knew that other nations represented it equally badly, if not worse, and that Russia did so most abominably. For Japan, it

seemed a heaven-sent opportunity to strike Russia in the rear, while the Czarist army was engaged on the European front. If for any reason she had been obliged to refrain from taking an aggressive step, it would have been profitable to remain neutral and supply the belligerents and neutrals with those commodities which Western countries were prevented from exporting.

For some time before the War, doubt had been expressed as to the advantages of the Anglo-Saxon Alliance. Not a few individuals, and among them some in important posts, were not satisfied with this arrangement. They thought that all the good in it was absorbed by England, and that their own country got nothing in return. They had forgotten the circumstances under which it was formed and what a tower of strength it had then proved. The Alliance, as it then stood in its revised form, imposed no obligation whatever on Japan to enter the War on either side. She was perfectly free to act as she chose. At this juncture, Germanophile and Pro-Russians turned avowed Anglophobes, and these looked upon the opening of the War as the signal for the abrogation of the Alliance. Those who did not go so far advocated neutrality. But Okuma and Kato, who were then in power, were wiser and saw farther. They observed the spirit, if not the letter of the Alliance. While they dipped into the future and studied the probable consequences of the coming struggle, they had no hesitation in their minds what path to take. To them it was clearly a moral duty, and no allowance was made for possible loss or probable gain. Within fifteen days after England opened hostilities with Germany, Japan followed suit. This decision was not received with enthusiasm by the Japanese populace, or, strange to say, by

British subjects in China either. It was an anomalous psychological moment—not that there was any traitorous design against the national or Allied forces, but there was unbounded admiration for the energy and organization of the enemy. A belief prevailed in some quarters that the Kaiser's army would finally triumph. This was partly due to the systematic propaganda on the part of Germany, and partly to the manœuvres of an otherwise unimportant group of Anglophobes. The Government never wavered in its policy of abiding by the spirit of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, but "Japan's part in the War has not," in the words of Lord Haldane, uttered in the House of Lords (Feb. 15, 1927) "yet been adequately recorded by the historian." The following summary, coming from the pen of an expert and close observer, and a foreigner as well, bears no taint of national bias or undue patriotism. Captain M. D. Kennedy, in a recent book of his, enumerates among the contributions made by the Japanese Navy to the Allied and Associated cause—"their capture of the German naval base and fortress of Tsingtao; their escorting of Australian and New Zealand troops and war material;<sup>1</sup> their help in protecting the trade routes against commerce raiders and in covering Australia and New Zealand; their assistance in releasing British warships for service in other theatres of operation; their help in mopping up Germany's insular possessions in the Pacific and in destroying the German wireless stations; and the indirect help given in the final defeat of von Spee's

<sup>1</sup> Captain Kennedy estimates the number of ships so released at fifty-six plus many more used in the escort of troop transports, the Mediterranean patrol work, and covering Australia and New Zealand and the South African trade routes. *Some Aspects of Japan and Defence Forces.*

squadron and of the *Emden*, and in many other ways." When he mentioned "many other ways," Captain Kennedy had in mind, among other incidents, the unfortunate mutiny at Singapore, in February 1915, which the blue-jackets of the Japanese cruiser *Otowa* were largely instrumental in quelling—in conjunction with British soldiers.

In order better to estimate Japan's contribution in the Great War—that is, to the Allied and Associated Governments—one may ask, What would have been the effect if Japan had stood aloof, or if she had joined the Entente Powers, if she had failed to co-operate with England, if she had not guarded the passage for the transportation of the Australian troops?

The Great War, while it furnished a test occasion for proving the sincerity of the Japanese Government and the value of its alliance, opened for it two unique opportunities for falling into temptation. I refer to her dealings with China and to her adventure in Siberia.

Taking advantage, it would seem, of the fact that other countries were involved in a life-and-death struggle in the West, and noticing the utter impotence of China for defence or resistance, the Okuma Ministry approached the Chinese Government with various proposals, some of which verged on an imperialistic encroachment upon the sovereignty of the Celestial Republic.

The famous "Twenty-one Demands"—of which several are quite reasonable, and the worst of which were never made as demands, but proposed as a basis for negotiations—were certainly most obnoxious to China, and were severely criticized even in Japan. They were a colossal blunder in Okuma's usually Liberal foreign policy. These demands were made

capital of by Young China, who aroused a storm of indignation in her own country, and who, by appealing to the friendly sentiments of America and by employing innumerable hirelings, made matters look very much worse than they really were. The estrangement between China and Japan on the one hand, and Japan and America on the other, was accomplished in a remarkably thorough manner.

American public opinion, already irritated on the question of immigration, was made worse by the news of the so-called Twenty-one Demands. To add to the anti-Japanese flame, the ambiguous movement of the Japanese troops in Siberia served as fresh fuel. Rightly to understand Japan's position in the Siberian expedition, a few words concerning the events preceding it are necessary. In March 1917 occurred the Russian Revolution, followed a year later by a treaty with Germany, signed at Brest-Litovsk. It was then feared that Germany could stretch her arms as far as Vladivostok and gain access to the vast amount of munitions stored there. Japan was naturally asked by the Allies to prevent such a disaster, and she occupied this sea-port, the British and American navies helping her troops. About this time the Czecho-Slovak prisoners, pent up in Siberia, were making every effort to join the Allied Armies, and were impeded in their progress eastward by the Bolsheviks. It was now designed that they should be rescued by the combined troops of England, France, Italy, America and Japan. The number of each national contingent was strictly limited. The Japanese army, which numbered most, knew best the exact condition of the Red Army, knew also the insufficiency of these allied troops; but, without fully informing the other forces, Japan dispatched more troops than were her fixed con-



tingent. When, in a few months (1920), the Czech army was relieved and sent home, the European and American troops were withdrawn, leaving the Japanese to guard the railways.

Left thus alone on the field where prevailed confusion, which the White Russians present on the spot made still worse confounded, Japan became more and more involved in their interests, thus making herself unpopular with the Reds, who grew increasingly powerful as time went on. The result was that Japan squandered some £90,000,000, besides losing hundreds of her sons. The highest reward for her thankless task was the wholesale massacre of the Japanese inhabitants of the town of Nikolaievsk, and the suspicion she won for herself among the nations of the earth of having territorial ambition in Siberia. The Japanese soldiers stationed in Siberia in company with those of other nationalities did not come up to the reputation won by the army dispatched to Peking in the Boxer Rebellion. This filibustering expedition was very strongly condemned by the Liberal Party at home, but the military clique seemed too far committed to retrace its steps. However, in October 1922 the Russian mainland was vacated, and, pending the reparation for the Nikolaievsk massacre, a small contingent of troops occupied Saghalin until a treaty concerning boundaries there was negotiated in 1925.

#### 14. JAPAN IN THE PEACE CONFERENCE

In the Peace Conference at Paris and Versailles there were three questions which specially concerned Japan :

(1) When discussing the Covenant of the League of Nations, Japan proposed that in the preamble should be inserted a phrase endorsing " the principles

of the equality of nations and the just treatment of their nationals." She was well aware that the proposition was only academic, involving no practical issues. She was warned aforetime, too, that the English-speaking peoples would turn it down—and they did, in spite of eleven out of seventeen votes being recorded in its favour. Australia in particular was furiously opposed to any suggestion of equality. Viscount Cecil opposed it in the name of the British Empire, on the ground that the points were either vague and ineffective or else of no practical significance. In the latter case they opened the door to serious controversy and to interference in the domestic affairs of State.<sup>1</sup> How far his utterances on this vexed question came from his heart, is doubtful. Speaking of his demeanour on this occasion, an American eye-witness, Mr. D. H. Miller, says: "It seemed to me at the time that Cecil felt that he was performing a difficult and disagreeable duty. After making his statement, he sat with his eyes fixed on the table and took no part in the subsequent debate."<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Wilson did lip-service to the doctrine of equality as the basic principle of the League, but declared that questions like this must be decided unanimously, and not by majority. He was perfectly well aware that the Japanese amendment was intrinsically just and reasonable. He was equally well aware that his countrymen and the Australians would not accept it. He descends from his idealist height and says: "How can you treat on its merits in this quiet room a question which will not be treated on its merits when it gets out of this room? It is a question altogether of the wisest thing to do,

<sup>1</sup> Florence Wilson, *The Origin of the League Covenant*, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> *The Drafting of the Covenant*, Vol. I, p. 461.

not a question of our sentiment towards each other or of our position with regard to the abstract statement of the equality of nations." Japan withdrew the motion, but it is with her a live issue, which will crop up at one time or other as occasion may present. An idea of this sort is possessed of a vitality which will outlive any mechanical ruling.

(2) In the distribution of mandates in the Pacific, Mr. Wilson's preference was to give all to Australia; but, thanks to an understanding previously entered into between England and France on one side, and Japan on the other, in the early days of the War, the German possessions north of the equator were assigned to Japan. These included, together with the Marshall and Caroline Islands, the insignificant island of Yap, which suddenly shot up into prominence as a bone of some contention between America and Japan, because of the cable facilities installed there for communication with Guam. Feverish excitement waged for a time around this islet, owing to the general ill-will engendered in America against Japan by Chinese propagandists. The question found a satisfactory solution later, at the Washington Conference, in the compromise made by both parties.

(3) Few things have proved the efficacy of propaganda in international matters more clearly than what China did in Europe, and particularly in America, in claiming her right of acquiring Kiaochow directly from the Peace Congress and not from Japan, who had wrested it from Germany by force of arms, with the avowed object of returning it to China. Under the leadership of the American Minister in Peking, and hired foreign advisers, China raised a hue and cry against the "territorial ambition" of Japan. She exaggerated the importance of the question,

even enlarging the size of the area under discussion from the 250 square miles of Kiaochow to the whole province of Shantung. When the War opened, China was occupied with internal troubles, and did not join the Allied Governments until August 1917—that is, three years after it began and fourteen months before it closed. Too absorbed by warfare at home, China could take no part whatever in the World War, but, by adroit manipulation of the situation, she very nearly gained all that she asked for. And though, at the last moment, her prize slipped beyond her reach and she refused to sign the Treaty of Versailles, her procedure at Paris was effective in paving for her the way to satisfaction at Washington three years later. How faithfully she lived up to the reputation she gained in that Conference remains still to be seen.

#### 15. THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

The War, ostensibly waged to end war, had, like all other wars, the effect of whetting thirst for another. With unprecedented rapidity, naval armament was augmented in every country commanding a sea. The most conspicuous of the aspirants was the United States. Suddenly she became a militant Power. Her budget increased by leaps and bounds. The pre-war sum of 680,000,000 dollars doubled in 1917. Next year it mounted to 18 billion dollars, and in 1919 to over 25 billions. Of this huge sum, one fourth was devoted to war-like purposes. However, even America could not continue long at this ratio. Severely incriminating each other, the three naval Powers—Britain, America and Japan—vied in the race. The disastrous effect, economically and morally, was obvious. Mr. Harding and his party pledged themselves before his election to the

reduction of the Budget. It was evident that no one country could undertake disarmament single-handed. It was a thousand pities that America was not in the League of Nations, but she wished to outdo it in the work of peace by calling a conference of nations intimately interested in naval disarmament.

Important as was the financial consideration involved in the reduction, there was another reason for America's taking the initiative in calling the conference. The object of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was strangely twisted in the mind of the American public. To anyone who had perused the articles of the Alliance with care, it was impossible to misconstrue it as in any way directed to any anti-American design—the more so, since, in the revised form of 1911, it was provided that neither party shall be drawn into war against a nation with which it has a general arbitration treaty, and America was understood to be such a nation. But such is the power of ignorance, suspicion and vicious propaganda, that even those who knew better were practically forced to the policy of putting an end to it, and the United States looked to the conference as affording the best occasion for so doing. It cannot be denied that, by the time the Alliance was renewed for the third time, in 1911, both England and Japan had lost much of their enthusiasm. There was no positive disapproval in responsible quarters, but its necessity could not longer be demonstrated, after Russia and Germany had receded from the active arena of Far Eastern politics. Moreover, in 1907 there was signed the Anglo-Russian Convention, fixing English and Russian spheres of interest in Persia and making superfluous any other arrangement intended to check Russian advance

upon India. Three years later, when the Anglo-Japanese commercial Treaty was revised, the negotiations were not carried on in the most cordial manner. Both nations felt somewhat estranged, and this feeling was accentuated by Australia. Far-seeing statesmen, like Lord Grey, expressed more than once the belief that the continuance of the Alliance was a desideratum for the two nations, but the Great War brought America into such pre-eminence economically and politically that Great Britain could ill afford to give her any cause for suspicion—and America, or rather her yellow journals, had viewed the Anglo-Japanese Alliance with ungrounded suspicion, as though it were directed against her.

There still lingered a sentiment against annulling a treaty which had been faithfully maintained for twenty years. Mr. Balfour, on the eve of its termination, spoke of it with a glow of sentiment, though he was not a man to be charged with sentimentality. "It had served a great purpose," he said, "in two great wars. It had stood the strain of common sacrifice, common anxieties, common effort, common triumphs. When two nations had been united in that fiery ordeal, they cannot at the end of it take off their hats one to the other and politely part as two strangers who travel together for a few hours in a railway train." Were there, then, advantages in the abrogation great enough to throw sentiment overboard? England would not take the initiative. Neither would Japan. In the post-war economy of England, the goodwill of the creditor country was an asset for which the sacrifice of a sentiment was not too costly. It was even stated on various occasions by her public men that England would build a naval base in Singapore in order to curry

favour with the United States. Japan, sentimental as she is, was too proud to cling to a document which had outlived its first great object. The only country that believed the treaty to possess life, and even menacing power, was America; hence she would do everything to make it null and void of effect. This seemed to be the second reason for calling the conference in Washington.

The third reason was obviously to help China stand on her feet—a task to which the United States had practically committed herself when she persuaded that country to declare war against Germany. Young China had endeared herself to the generously minded Americans in the Peace Congress, and, unable to fight single-handed for her own cause, resorted to her historic tactics of utilizing her friends to do battle for her.

Such, then, were the chief reasons which prompted Mr. Harding to call the conference in Washington, though the nominal object was the discussion of naval disarmament. Those who were not satisfied with the League of Nations turned to Washington with great gusto. Mr. H. G. Wells called it, at its beginning, "the nearest approach the human will and intelligence have yet made to a resolute grapple against fate upon this planet," and when it ended he called it a "new experiment in human reasonableness."

As far as Japan was concerned, the world looked upon her presence in the Conference as that of a culprit summoned before the bar. She was in the limelight of an inordinate curiosity and profound suspicion. She was most discussed and least understood. It never was her method to broadcast her motive or her thought. The story of Premier Hara's farewell to the chief Japanese delegate, Admiral

Kato, was scarcely repeated, except in a small intimate circle: "I am sorry, Admiral, to ask of you such a hard task," said Hara; "but please go and agree with the American proposal for disarmament. All the nations are groaning under the burden of armament, and their cries have reached heaven. It is God speaking through the mouth of Harding. You will render signal service not only for Japan, but for the whole human race." Here was the source of that firmness with which Kato ignored the opposition made by the Japanese public to Mr. Hughes' naval ratio. This conciliatory spirit seems not to have been expected in the Conference. On the contrary, it was even feared that militant Japan might run amok. What an inscrutable people we must seem, if we may take Mr. Wells as a representative journalist. His letters, dated Washington, November 15, and December 14, 1921, do not read like the writings of the self-same man, as regards the parts relating to Japan. In the former he makes free use of unsavoury adjectives in speaking of Japan, but in the latter declares the good results of the Conference in the following terms: "If there is one thing to be noted more than another about the work that has led up to this settlement it is the adaptability, the intelligent and sympathetic understanding shown by Japan in these transactions. . . . They win my respect more and more. . . . The idea of them as of a people insanely patriotic, patriotically subtle and treacherous, mysterious and mentally inaccessible has been largely dispelled. Our Western world, I am convinced, can work with the Japanese and understand and trust them." <sup>1</sup>

To have cleared the national character of undeserved misconceptions—and of such there are dozens,

<sup>1</sup> Wells, *Washington and the Riddle of Peace*, Ch. XXVIII.



as General Colville<sup>1</sup> gives instance after instance in order to rectify them—was in itself a great gain. But the material benefits accruing in consequence of that conference are by no means small, in spite of the complaint still heard in some quarters against the ratio of 5:5:3. This single provision has lightened the yearly burden of the nation by at least £25,000,000 sterling. This is perhaps the minimum sum calculated, and is given out by the Japanese Navy. A detailed computation increases the amount of money saved to as much as £90,000,000. Suppose half of this to be the actual saving, the gift of the Washington Conference—in the fiscal system, in which about one half (£88,000,000) of the regular revenue of £173,000,000 is derived from taxation, £50,000,000 is sufficiently important to pay for a false notion of national honour.

Not to be reckoned in dollars or pounds is the immense relief effected in human passion, in jealousy and suspicion, in nervous strain and mutual bickering.

As to another feature of the Conference—namely, the termination of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance—no positive harm has resulted from this to either party. Neither will anything good result therefrom. England's relations with America have shown little improvement as a reward—certainly not in such controversies as those about oil and rubber, or French naval compromise, or parity of auxiliary craft. The cancellation of the formal comradeship looks as though it had been a futile sacrifice made by Great Britain at the altar of the Hearst papers, or the offering of another infant Peace at the temple of Moloch.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Henry Colville, *The Allies*, in which he devotes two or three chapters to misrepresentations, etc.

## 16. VEXING PROBLEMS AT HOME AND ABROAD

The Washington Conference contributed directly to the stabilization of the international relations of the Far East, and, indirectly, to the cause of universal peace. Besides the return of Shantung, there were many questions alluded to in that Conference which the Chinese delegation would have liked to bring up as a charge against Japan's imperialistic designs. Thanks to the protecting arms stretched out to them by the United States, they were encouraged to pursue their claims, and would have gone further, if an awkward query had not rather suddenly been thrust upon them—"What is China?" The response made revealed a glimpse, only a glimpse, of the chaotic state of that Republic—not at all so roseate as her delegates described in eloquent phrases—and the Conference closed without a definite answer to the interrogation.

True to their long diplomatic tradition, the Chinese delegation succeeded in getting the most of that which they desired by "pitting one barbarian against another." One startling revelation was, however, made, of which none had had an inkling, unless it were a few curious or studiously minded individuals who had read the *London Daily Telegraph* of February 15, 1910. This was the existence of a secret treaty between Russia and China, dating back to June 1896, eight years before the Russo-Japanese conflict. According to this compact, the contracting Powers pledged themselves "to support each other by all the land and sea forces at their disposal against any aggression by Japan directed against Russian territory in eastern Asia, China, or Korea. During military operations all Chinese ports would be open to Russian vessels.

And the right to build a railway across Manchuria would be granted to the Russo-Chinese Bank. The treaty would remain in force for fifteen years after the railway contract was confirmed."

All the while Japan was fighting Russia in Manchuria in 1904-5—apologizing for trespassing on Chinese territory—with the war zone limited, as Mr. Hayes desired, out of respect for "the neutrality and administrative integrity of China," China might have mobilized her millions against Japan at any moment. If only the existence of such a treaty had been known, the much-talked-about Manchurian problem of to-day would never have arisen. The exposure of this document came too late to serve any purpose, except as a fresh lesson to Japan that she was no match for her neighbour either in secrecy or in propaganda!

Of far more practical import at and after the Washington Conference was the question of the withdrawal of Japanese troops from Siberia—the troops that had stayed there after the Allied forces had departed. The harm and utter uselessness of their presence in a country where they were not welcome, were made the subject of innumerable attacks on the Japanese Government, both at home and abroad; but the misinformed military clique in Tokyo were deaf to reason. It took many months to convince them of the error of their ways, and not until the sum of £150,000,000 had been expended and hundreds of lives sacrificed, were the regiments brought back from Siberia in the autumn of 1922.

The evacuation of Russian territory was effected when civil order was assured in Vladivostok. The return of the army was no particular occasion for celebration by the populace.

The populace was far more interested in other things than a military adventure in unfamiliar regions on the continent. Siberia did not appeal to the imagination of the general public. Their eyes were more closely drawn to the glittering economic promises dangled before them.

After the close of the World War there were evidences of an approaching economic collapse, if business ways were not mended; but, still blinded by the feverish excitement created during the War, the industrialists effected no change. Inflation continued; prices remained high. Where signs of a coming crash were seen, people believed these were only a passing phase. Capitalists continued to revel in enormous profits. Labourers, whom the World War, and after it the Russian Revolution, educated to assert their claims, far from being daunted by intimations of a crisis, did not cease to clamour for higher wages and better treatment in every way. Strikes were frequent, though at the same time unemployment increased. Proletarians began to organize. The men known and despised as *eta* (outcasts) became conscious of their rights, as equals with the best of their fellow-citizens. In one word, the country was seething with the awakening sense of the hitherto neglected classes. The introduction of Marxian doctrines, and the propaganda by the emissaries and agents of Communism, added fuel to this nascent class consciousness. The more the Government tried to arrest it, the stronger it grew and the more tightly it was organized. We shall revert to this problem again.

The mental turmoil of the nation found a terrible counterpart in the shaking of the earth-crust in the late summer of 1923. Since history began, there had been no catastrophe so damaging in this country—

perhaps in the world—as the earthquake that took place at midday on the 1st of September of that year. The terror and devastation wrought by it defy all description. It visited one of the most populous parts of thickly populated Japan, destroying Tokyo and Yokohama and many minor towns and villages. The total number of the dead and injured is officially returned as 156,693, though in reality it seems to have been greater. The loss of property is variously estimated—the sum usually accepted as probable being £550,000,000 sterling.

A comparative table showing the number of square metres burned in the historical conflagrations and the loss of property by them is here appended. In the case of Tokyo it was not so much the earthquake itself as the fires that followed, which were so destructive.

Cities.	Year.	Burned Areas.	Loss of Wealth.
		(Sq. metres)	
London .	1666, Sept. 2-6	1,768,603	£17,030,000
Chicago .	1871, Oct. 8-9	8,595,880	33,000,000
San Francisco	1906, Apr. 18-21	12,165,344	75,000,000
Tokyo .	1923, Sept. 1-3	33,477,836	550,640,000

The sympathy shown in all quarters of the globe was profound, and the whole nation appreciated this with unalloyed gratitude. Particularly noticeable was the promptitude with which American organizations of all sorts and classes came to the rescue on this occasion, at the instance of the Ambassador, Mr. Cyrus Woods. Millions of Yen in the form of food, medicine, clothing and other articles of pressing need, poured in. The American Government itself aided in this work of charity.

On the part of the suffering millions, the common tribulation united them for a few days in true fraternity. In the midst of the burning houses, and over the bodies of the maimed and the slain, there reigned a spirit of tender sorrow and pity—so different from the sentiment aroused under similar circumstances on a battlefield! Each shared his meagre meal with another—indeed, many willingly fasted in order to feed their weaker brothers and sisters. They wondered, at the same time, how long they themselves could sustain life on this high level of emotion.

In a few days a rumour was started that the Koreans were poisoning the wells of Tokyo; that they were marching in bands to massacre the Japanese; that Communists were plotting to kill those in authority, and so forth and so on. Upon overwrought minds the result was a panic of fear. Young men armed themselves as well as they could. They caught and sometimes killed any Korean who happened to attract their notice. The police watched for those suspected of communistic ideas and arrested them. From the general elevation of emotions in the first moments of disaster, there was a sudden drop to brutality, in the absence of civil order. But wickedness did not last longer than goodwill. Martial law having been proclaimed, all efforts were made to bring order out of chaos. The destruction of Tokyo, the Capital of the Empire, was a national and not a local disaster.

The Government set to work upon speedy reconstruction. At the end of the year, the Diet, in a special session, voted £59,700,000 for the relief and reconstruction of the Capital. This sum was later reduced by nearly £13,000,000. Under a special Office created for the purpose, a new metropolis, with

wider and better roads and parks, was planned and started. It took less than seven years for the phoenix to rise from its own ashes, and the work cost £82,590,000.

Within ten months after the earthquake, when American help had been so lavishly extended, and while the nation's sentiments of gratitude were still warm and vivid—within ten months of the great catastrophe, while the nation was still struggling with the debris of destruction—the American Senate sprung a surprise by passing, in May 1924, and by immediately putting into execution (in July), an immigration law which was aimed, though not explicitly, yet none the less distinctly, at the discriminating exclusion of Japanese immigrants.

The question of Japanese immigration had long been a moot question; but by the satisfactory operation of the so-called "Gentlemen's Agreement" of November 1907, according to which Japan consented to refuse passports to coolies who desired to go to America, the question had practically been solved. Under this compact there was even a decrease of Japanese population in the United States, more persons leaving than coming in. In spite of all these facts, Congress proposed to abrogate the Gentlemen's Agreement and to frame a law which, as Mr. Charles E. Hughes—then Secretary of State—himself said would be regarded by the Japanese as "a legislative enactment fixing a stigma upon them." The Secretary added further—that "such legislative action would largely undo the work of the Washington Conference on the Limitation of Armaments which so greatly improved our relations with Japan"; that "the manifestation of American interest and generosity in providing relief to the sufferers in the recent earthquake disaster in Japan would not avail

to diminish the resentment which would follow the enactment of such a measure, as this enactment would be regarded as an insult not to be palliated by any act of charity."

This Act, excluding the Japanese, was placed on the statute book of the United States. What glory was thereby added to its pages, it is difficult for a foreigner to understand. That it was not approved by a vast number of Americans, is obvious from the protests made by many organizations of varying tradition, and from the general tone of the American newspapers, excepting, of course, those of the Hearst Syndicate—ever malignantly and maliciously hostile to Japan, as to England.

The repercussion of this legislative act on Japan was profound. She felt as though her best friend had, of a sudden and without provocation, slapped her on the cheek. She questioned the sanity of American legislators. At heart, however silent, she does not now and never will accede to this law, passed in a manner so far from "gentlemanly"—whatever may be the legal "rights" of a country as regards its own enactments. Each year that passes without amendment or abrogation only strengthens and sharpens our sense of injury, which is destined to show itself, in one form or another, in personal and public intercourse. All talk of peace and goodwill is vain, so long as one nation sows in the heart of another the seeds of suspicion and resentment.

Is Japan, then, arming herself for Vengeance? Is she preparing for War? No statesman believes that the anti-Japanese clause can be exaggerated into a *casus belli*; but the evil it has done is the vitiation of mind by the loss of a noble trust in a friend, a confidence in a cause. The injury inflicted on the nation is not of a material order. Brutus' thrust



was physically no more painful than Cassius' or Casca's; but it was the unkindest cut of all.

And yet, in the face of it all, and though the Exclusion Clause of the Immigration Law of the United States is about the only question pending between Japan and other countries, she still holds to her faith in the integrity and the sense of honour of the American people as a whole, and is patiently abiding the time when Congress may change the law—the only way in which the wrong can be redressed. While these lines are being written, the Press reports the probable revision of the obnoxious clause.

In the meantime, Japan's preparations are for peace and the maintenance of peaceful relations with the rest of the world. There is scarcely an international Conference of any importance in which Japan has not participated, hardly any document drawn up for world peace which she has not signed with sincerity, not a single "universal way of heaven and earth" which she has not accepted as a guiding principle of government and diplomacy.

## CHAPTER IV

### GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

“ The best government is that which teaches us to govern ourselves.”—GOETHE.

#### I. KOKUTAI, JAPAN'S CONSTITUTIONAL IDIOMORPHISM

IN the political terminology of the Japanese people occurs a word frequently used and difficult of translation into any modern European language. “ *Kokutai* ” is a Chinese term found in an ancient history, “ The Book of Han,” where it appears in a public rescript dated 23 B.C. But in Japan it has assumed a specific significance, since it was applied by the Mito school of publicists, in the middle of the last century, to the fundamental characteristics of the Japanese royal authority. During the last thirty years or so, this characteristic has been more and more emphasized as a distinguishing mark of the originality of our political system. What was started as a half-ethical and half-political notion has been turned into a political norm.

*Kokutai*—literally the “ Body of the Country ”—when first used in China, referred to the structure and function of a body politic; and, later, to what may be called its organization. In this country particular stress is placed upon the essence of the monarchical constitution, as lying in its hereditary continuity in one family. We call this principle a “ body ”—not in contradiction to a “ soul,” but as

an embodiment of a spirit. We have previously seen the historical basis for such an idea. And it is on historical ground that this is maintained. The Imperial family has, in its authenticated existence of 2000 years or more, passed through many vicissitudes. Some of its members were murdered, others slain in war, still others exiled; but regal title has never departed from the family. Nobody ever cast a doubt upon its legitimacy. At times this was coveted, but never disputed. Whenever a rebellion arose, it was directed against the "perfidious subjects around the Throne," and not against the Throne itself. Hence the obedience rendered was voluntary. To all practical intents and purposes the ruler had the consent and assent of the governed.

Historicity being the ground of its claim, *Kokutai* does not resort to any juristic justification—hence the difficulty of making it intelligible to foreigners. In England, too, historical usages are accepted as legal, and it has taken centuries to expound some of them in terms of modern jurisprudence. To an outsider, the connotation of the term "Crown" is well-nigh incomprehensible—or, take the dogma that "the King never dies," or that "the King can do no wrong."

For want of satisfactory explanation by a natural course of reasoning, you call it a fiction. Sir Henry Maine defines legal fiction as a pragmatic device of concealing or affecting to conceal the fact that a rule of law has undergone alteration.

A Japanese publicist, Dr. Nakano,<sup>1</sup> has put in clear words the quiddity of the Japanese constitutional form. Speaking of the dominant autocratic note of our *Kokutai*, he says that it is due to the structural and genetic characteristics of our written

<sup>1</sup> *Ordinance Power of the Japanese Emperor*, pp. 3, 4, 34.

Constitution. He classifies monarchical constitutional government into three kinds: (1) parliamentary monarchical government, in which, though the plenitude of the sovereign power of the State is vested in the King, most of the executive and legislative powers are exercised by the King in parliament, as in England, Spain and Italy; (2) monarchical government with the principle of popular sovereignty, in which the power of the King is regarded as granted by the sovereign people, as in Belgium; (3) monarchical constitutional government, which has characteristics predicated of neither form of the constitutions numbered one and two. Examples of the last form are the pre-revolutionary German States and Japan.

So much for the structural features. As regards the genetic reasons for the autocratic character of the Japanese Constitution, Dr. Nakano enumerates the presence of dissatisfied elements in the country after the abolition of feudalism, and the consequent fear of national disruption; the necessity for a united front against possible foreign aggression; the need of a strong and centralized government, and the long monarchical tradition which had obtained among the people.

*Kokutai*, then, reduced to its simplest term, means the retention of the highest social dignity and political powers by the head of the Family which subdued the country and has ruled it from the beginning of our history. This family is conceived as embracing the whole nation—since the first ruler brought with him his kith and kin, and it is their descendants who now form the bulk of the population. In a narrower sense, the Family includes the more direct blood relationships of the ruler. The Emperor is thus the representative of the nation and the symbol of its unity. Thus the true nature of the bonds which

unite men in government and subjection is, primarily, a mythical blood-relationship; secondarily, a moral tie; and, thirdly, a legal obligation.

## 2. THE THREEFOLD FUNCTIONS OF THE STATE

Constitutionalism makes its first appearance in the political thought of the Japanese in the Charter Oath already quoted. One sees it there in a foetal, amorphous stage. It is conceived, but what form it would take was left for the future. For two decades it remained the mere pronouncement of a principle, though it was a revolutionary step to make that pronouncement in 1868, when the actual working of a representative government was utterly unknown even among our leaders of thought. Meagre information about popular government had been furnished in two or three pamphlets and reports on the American Government. One wonders that any Liberal ideas captivated the young men who at the time led the new régime.

It must be said how plastically the first and most important article of the Oath may be interpreted. Take "Public Opinion"—a term capable of infinite connotation. We have seen how the last article of Prince Shôtoku's "Principles" could be construed. Viscount Fukuoka, who made the first draft of the Oath, says himself that the original wording ran: "The Assembly of the nobility shall be convened." But his colleague, Yuri, would see the "people" represented in some capacity in that assembly, and the suggestion was adopted without any explanatory clauses as to who should form the bulk of the conference. The wording was purposely left in this more or less ambiguous, embryonic form, as the idea itself was only just communicated. What was certain about the phrasing of the first article was

that some novel, striking doctrine had to be incorporated into the new régime, and that this régime was surely no longer to be absolutistic. Fortunately, there were some precedents which gave those who made the draft courage to hope for the participation of a number of citizens in public affairs. When the Tokugawa Government was at its wit's end in negotiating with Perry and Harris, it appealed to the *daimyo* and their retainers for an opinion—a procedure never before resorted to. Almost simultaneously, in Kyoto, Emperor Kōmei assembled the Court nobles, who had scarcely meddled with political questions for centuries, in order to discuss the legality of the Shōgun's conduct in concluding a treaty with foreign Powers. Some of those present were bold enough to speak for the opening of the country.

With these examples before their eyes, it was the most natural thing for the new Government to propose that feudal principalities should send their delegates to the general convention, each fief sending one to three men according to its size. There were two kinds of these representatives; one, the "*chōshi*"—literally, the "imposed or assessed men," meaning that their talents were impressed by the State for public service—and the other, the "*kōshi*"—the tribute men (what a far cry from a tribune!), implying that these were sent to the central Government as a sort of homage paid by the feudatories. The two groups were to form a strictly legislative, or rather deliberative body, and their members were expressly debarred from accepting any administrative post. The tripartite division of State functions into the legislative, executive and judicial, was newly learned from the American practice, and new lessons are conscientiously observed.

This body met several times in the course of the

few months during which it existed. The members cut a rather amusing figure in the sight of the public, as they held their sessions openly. Looking back upon them now, they remind one of a debating club of schoolboys, tackling all imaginable sorts of problems—from the planting of trees on empty plots to the uplift of the nation's morals. They were empowered to receive petitions and opinions from private individuals, by whom so new a power was not to be missed. The petitions poured in, ranging from the pettiest local concern, not excluding personal slanders, to the widest problems of universal goodwill.

A few months of this democratic experiment convinced practical minds of its utter imbecility, and it was soon suspended. Fortunately, however, even the practically minded did not confuse the institution they essayed with the principle they wished to incorporate. The idea was still fresh that a legislative power must function independently of the administrative and the judicial, and if the convocation of the "*chōshi*" and "*kōshi*" were to prove a delusion and a snare, go they should: their function could be dispensed with—or it could at least be improved.

The next body to be entrusted with the work of law-making was not intended to represent different localities or fiefs. It was to consist of picked men of large experience in public affairs—ex-governors, ministerial secretaries, legal experts, educators. They were nominated by the Crown in 1875. Thus was formed the Senate, *Genrō-in*, of an incomparably higher calibre than the quasi-legislative body of loquacious country youths which had preceded it. Simultaneously, to live up faithfully to Montesquieu's teaching, there was established the Supreme Court of Justice, presided over by judges trained in the principles and methods of Western jurisprudence.

This made clear the distinction between the legislative and judicial authorities, though still lacking in the idea of popular representation. Some years later, in 1889, prefectural diets were called into existence, the main object of which was to prepare the populace for a national deliberative assembly. All these new institutions were so many methods of national training for the development of political liberty and of representative government, so many stages in the birth of a modern nation. The question may be asked, What were they driving at? Did we set a mark to strive for?

In these early days of our constitutional experimentation, the influence of English and American ideas was paramount. The following story is significant in this connection. When the House of Senators was established, the Emperor summoned the President to his presence and asked him to study different national Constitutions of the West, in order to frame one suitable for Japan. So saying, he handed him a copy of Todd's *Parliamentary Government of England*, obviously to use as a guide.

For nearly four years the Senate made it a special duty, among other pressing demands upon it, to prepare a draft Constitution. In the meantime, the subject was taken up with equal zeal by the unofficial leaders of public opinion, whose view-point would naturally differ in many respects from that of the official senators. It was a happy circumstance in the history of Japanese constitutionalism that the men who took the most active part in non-official capacities had once been in office, and that those who were the spokesmen of the official attitude were usually their personal friends—fellow-workers in the earliest days of the Meiji reforms.

It was also a fortunate circumstance that, for one



reason or another, English ideas were afloat in the air, and were more accessible than those of any other school of political philosophy. Montesquieu and Rousseau had, of course, their followers, but they were referred to for ultimate principles and not for practical guidance. John Stuart Mill, May and Austin were as pilots on the untried sea of constitutionalism, and only later did we make acquaintance with Gneist and Lorenz von Stein.

The blind confidence that a parliament would remedy all the thousand-and-one ills to which the body politic is heir, was current among the ardent youths. Especially was this the case in those clans which did not reap much benefit by the change from feudalism to a centralized government. A cry went up from disappointed communities and advanced individuals who had believed that a new era was ushered in by the august promise of the Charter Oath. Great was their disappointment when they found that the prize for which they longed did not so easily fall into their hands.

Some of the malcontents were goaded into open revolt, only to be punished as traitors; others to assassination, only to be condemned as criminals; still others to violent speeches, only to be suppressed into silence. A few of the more enlightened statesmen were now convinced that the formation of political parties was an urgent need, that they were the only substitute for rebellion, intrigue and assassination.

### 3. BEGINNING AND CHARACTER OF POLITICAL PARTIES

Under the Tokugawa régime every precaution was taken to discourage or break up popular combination. Wherever five people were gathered together for a

purpose not clearly definable, they were suspected of secret designs, and hence liable to arrest under a law forbidding *to-tô*. It was not easy to conquer this habit of thought, and hence party formation, even after the *to-tô* prohibition was abolished, had to contend for its very name.

The Council of Ministers, being composed of men entertaining widely differing views on every subject, and each having a large following, did not always see eye to eye. Nor were they, coming from different clans with different upbringing, perfectly sure of each other. Those who differed from the majority had no other outlet for the ventilation of their views than by way of force. The lustre of the first decade of Meiji was tarnished by uprisings in different provinces. To avoid consequences so disastrous, men with larger vision insisted on the formation of political parties. Even without the evil associations connected with *to-tô*, the banding together of men with the honest and open object of discussing political and social questions would be regarded with disfavour. To the authorities the very existence of such a combination was disconcerting. We may remind ourselves of the utter disregard of parties by some of the leading American statesmen of the Revolutionary epoch, including Washington. When, therefore, Itagaki (later Count) started an embryo party in his province of Tosa, in 1874, his scheme was too far ahead of his time. A few years later he enlarged his organization and made it national, many young men from other provinces flocking to his banner. When, in 1880, his party launched a campaign to demand the speedy convocation of a national assembly, it became to the Government a public menace, because of the universal response. In the autumn of 1881 he collected around him thousands of young and discontented men,

clamouring for a representative form of government. One may feel sympathy for the Government of the time, when one finds that the political education of the members of the new party was still sadly immature, and that of the masses infinitely more so—especially when one is told that the principles upon which they proposed to stand were mainly derived from the French writers of pre-Revolution days, Rousseau being the most admired and foremost teacher. The party bore the name *Jiyū-to*, which should be translated “Band of Liberty,” rather than “Liberal Party.”

Opposed to Itagaki's Radical group on the one hand and to the bureaucratic Government on the other, Okuma (afterwards Marquis) raised in 1882 his standard, on which was writ large—“Progress.” A few months previously, while he was still in the Council of Ministers, he had presented a sealed memorial to the Throne, begging for an immediate summoning of a national assembly. Meeting with rebuff from his colleagues, he resigned, and upon so doing was followed by many bright young officials of advanced views, who formed the nucleus of his party. It was immediately enlarged by others who had been educated by the greatest teacher of New Japan, Fukusawa. This “Party of Progress and Reform,” or *Kaishinto*, as it was called, held moderate views, and consisted of well-to-do members of the middle classes. The principles they advocated were based mainly on their study of English Liberalism. They were charged with being lukewarm and insincere. They certainly were more thoughtful than their rivals.

Each of the two parties mentioned had to wage incessant war, the one against the other, and both together against the Government. Those in power

regarded them at first with an air of hauteur, holding aloof from controversy, deeming it beneath their stately rank to cross swords with juvenile *ronin* in the arena. To them, to act was their calling; but to talk in public—why, that was the job of a raconteur! They were slow to perceive that eloquence was a weapon of democracy, and, even when they found that out, they could not overcome the inhibition of their training and the long-established habit of reticence. They could not and would not speak for themselves. They had to engage others to speak for them. They helped in the formation of a Conservative Party, led by a well-known newspaper editor, Fukuchi, but this was looked upon as a levy of hirelings, and failed to win the confidence of the public.

The Liberals and the Progressives surmounted the obstacles profusely strewn in their way by the authorities, and were tireless in arousing opposition to the Government. The Japanese nation owes to them an immense debt for the political education which they brought about. Through the Press and from the forum, they argued, harangued, roared against abuses actual and imaginary. While the over-cautious bureaucracy wielded its flaming sword to keep the populace away from the tree of political knowledge, the parties adopted every serpentine method to beguile it from innocence. But their popularity, or rather what confidence they earned, was due primarily to the outstanding personalities who led them. It was not that birds of the same feather flocked together. It was that birds of all feathers flocked under one leader. Within the framework of parties, in its earlier stages, one cannot help noticing the same relationship that had formerly bound his vassals to a feudal lord, or—to go still

further back—the members of *uji* to its head. This explains in part why, in this country, political parties have more or less clearly defined geographical spheres (*chiban*) of influence. As a general rule, localities which have any association, be it never so trivial, with the leader of a party or with his lieutenant, join that party. Tradition wields a stronger sway than interest or opinion.

It took nearly a quarter of a century before a more rational idea began to displace this sentimental view of party affiliation; but the process is by no means ended.

Prince Ito, the man most responsible for the Constitution, as its author, at first entirely ignored parties. When he came to appreciate their use and importance, he quietly walked into the old Liberal Party, which he had previously persecuted by repressive measures, but not before it was christened with a new name—the *Seiyukai* (A Society of Political Friends). Prince Katsura, too, was, in the early years of his career, an opponent of the party system, but later had to inaugurate one himself. Both these bureaucratic politicians learned by bitter experience during their respective premierships that without party backing they could not carry on administration.

Thus, by gradual steps, was forced upon the statesmen of Japan the conviction that party organization is indispensable for the actual working of a constitutional regimen. Theoretically they can be dispensed with; nay, they may even be proved to be an unmixed evil. But necessity transcends philosophy, or, as our proverb has it, "For the sake of the stomach, shoulders can't be spared." The idea once firmly accepted—that our Constitution, being granted *ex dono* by the Crown and not wrested from it, allows no scope for such accessories as political parties—is

still held as orthodox in some quarters ; but this does not preclude the mechanism of parties from practical politics. It is steadily becoming good form for a Cabinet to resign when the Opposition is in the majority.

Three obstacles lie in the path of the fuller development of the party system in this country. (1) One of them lies in the Constitution itself, according to which the Ministers are held responsible to the Crown and not to the Parliament. Theoretically, therefore, they can stay in office even if the party supporting them is defeated in the legislature. This means that the party as such may not form a government. (2) On all critical occasions the Emperor has been in the habit of calling upon a few of his old trusted servants, the *genrō*—the famous Elder Statesmen—for advice. Never has a Cabinet been appointed, however large its following in the Diet, without the Emperor first asking the *genrō*'s opinion. Usually these gentlemen recommend the nomination of the leader of the majority in the Diet ; but they may do otherwise, and the Emperor, who is by no means bound implicitly to follow their advice, does usually abide by it. But the *genrō* are not immortal, and at present only one has survived his colleagues. As none is chosen anew, extinction of the office is in sight. (3) Our Council of Ministers lacks that solidarity which should characterize a party government. In the Regulations of Official Appointments it is provided that the two portfolios of the Navy and the Army should be held respectively by an admiral and a general—just the men who are warned against any party affiliation.

Handicapped as the party movement in Japan is by anachronistic ideas reigning in influential circles, the country is being driven by rapid strides towards the realization of a party government. At no time

has this tendency been made clearer than when, in 1924, a super-party Cabinet, out of keeping with the times and representing no party whatever, was appointed. Public opinion strongly disapproved of this. In less than half a year it had to resign. The country is now definitely committed to a party system.

Before party machinery can reach in this country the stage of perfection that it has attained in England, it will have to pass through many phases of improvement. Such improvement must include, above all, the training of the temperament properly to understand "the concessionary principle"—to borrow Disraeli's words. At present, too often do passion, impulse and emotion take the place of knowledge, reason and justice. The notion of fair play is set aside, and that of "my-party-right-or-wrong" prevails. In their zeal for the success of their party, its members forget that it is, as its English name indicates, only a portion of a great whole, and are apt to identify its interests with the general interests of the State. They forget that "all government"—to quote Burke—"indeed, every human benefit and enjoyment, every virtue and every prudent act, is founded on compromise and barter." Most partisans still look upon compromise as weakness and betrayal. It was not very long ago that, in the heat of party strife, blood was spilt, and even at present every election is disgraced by some acts of violence. When we see, however, that the use of force is regarded by the public with disapproval instead of admiration for "a heroic deed," we have reason to expect improvement in party machinery.

There is another cause for hoping that party organization and action will change for the better. This hope lies in a tendency towards the elimination

of small factions and the disappearance of neutrals. The last general election (1930) has brought out this fact most clearly. Whether this recent experience was an isolated fact or a sign of a general movement, it is still too early to tell.

It is a serious problem where and how party cleavage will henceforth take place. At present it is vague, and the platforms of the two main parties, hereafter to be described, show no clear line of demarcation.

Though the Proletarians and the Marxists would see parties divided according to social classes, it seems more likely that the division will proceed according to the inborn temperament of individuals. In this regard what was stated by Bluntschli and Röhmer about two generations ago still holds true—in Japan as well as in Europe; for the types of mentality they described are universal. Of such there are four, and, corresponding to them, there are four “natural political parties”—Radicals, Liberals, Conservatives and Absolutists, and their main characteristics hardly need elucidation here.

#### 4. THE TRAINING FOR CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT

The most active days of political parties were in the decade preceding the proclamation of the Imperial Constitution (1881–90). The Radicals would have a thorough-going democratic constitution, akin to the French, while the moderates looked to the British Constitution as a model, and both distrusted the Government and the Senate, who were then engaged in drawing up the plan for one. What they most feared was that the much-talked-about Constitution would never see the light. Their clamour was somewhat allayed when the Emperor,



true to the promises of the Charter Oath, gave out, in 1881, that the National Diet would be called in 1890. A body of officials, led by Prince Ito, was forthwith appointed to visit European countries in order to study different political systems and to report on them, with the view of drafting a constitution suitable for the country.

Ito's lot at this juncture was no enviable one. Most extreme views, just short of republican, were pressed upon him for incorporation into the Constitution. Even among the foreign advisers whom he consulted abroad the right and left trends of opinion were struggling for mastery. Amid these conflicting views he steered his own course. Of this he was convinced—that the Constitution of the Japanese Empire must perforce be based on her historical consciousness. It cannot be otherwise. However perfect it may be theoretically, a foreign Constitution could not be followed in detail. Unlike Rousseau's State, the Japanese State is a growth, not an artifice reared by contract. The position of the Japanese ruler *vis-à-vis* his people is unique; his power is absolute; the authority he exercises is most like the *patria potestas* of ancient Rome. He rules the country more as a duty to bring peace and blessing than as a right to enforce his will upon his subjects. His relation with them partakes more of the nature of a tender father than of a stern master. Schiller said that it does not become a king to weep, but that it does not become a father not to weep. In many of the verses left by Emperor Meiji, how often we come across such as are drenched with loving tears! In preparing the Constitution, the power he is about to assign to his subjects is to be given of his own free accord. The rights to be acquired by his people are to be bestowed by him

as a charismatic gift and not under constraint. In one word, he sacrifices a part of his authority in order to endow his children with a larger measure of it. The Japanese Constitution is therefore an ordinance, in the sense that it is not a contract between the ruler and the ruled; it is unilateral in its origin, in that it is devised without the assent or the consent of the governed.

No wonder that the rôle assigned to the Emperor is an extensive one. It is to him, and not to the Diet, that the Ministers are responsible.

In framing the Constitution, Ito did not wish to make it an elaborate document, as he thought it unwise to bind the sovereign or the people with cast-iron fetters. He would rather see it develop by interpretation and practical application. It is for this reason that the Japanese Constitution is about the least cumbersome document of its kind, avoiding many subjects which are usually included in other national Constitutions. It is for this reason also, that, although it has been at work for forty years, during which over fifty sessions of the Diet have been held, it is already surrounded by numerous unwritten laws, as well as by numberless statutes, interpretative of its spirit.

Among these may be mentioned the recognition of the party, whose existence was entirely overlooked and whose influence was minimized at the beginning. Under the high-sounding appellation of the super-party Cabinet, ministry after ministry was formed in spite of opposition; but it was not long, as we have already seen, before Ito himself felt its power and came to lead a party himself.

Another peculiarity of our Constitution must be mentioned. Article XI provides that the Emperor has the supreme command of the army and of the

navy. He exercises this command, not through the Minister of War or of the Navy, but through the Chief of the General Staffs of the War and Navy. As these latter offices are independent of the Cabinet, they are directly answerable only to the sovereign, and hence they lie outside the competence of the Council of Ministers. Now the Ministers of the Navy and of the Army are, according to the Public Service Regulations, to be appointed from among the military and naval officers in active service. Thus there ensued the curious anachronistic custom of these officers acting over the head of a Premier. When the civilian members of a Cabinet come to respect the pressure of an Opposition, and resign because of it, the naval and military Ministers can complacently continue to hold their seats, immune from political changes. It is this anomalous privilege of the military men which has proved a frequent cause of the undue preponderance of the military element in our politics and sometimes in our diplomacy. Though the declaration of war and the conclusion of peace are within the power of the Cabinet, the naval and military authorities are in a position to put pressure on its decision. They have also power to formulate naval and military policies.<sup>1</sup> Soon after the London Naval Conference the legal aspect of the extraordinary power of the naval and military authorities in their relation to the Cabinet, was most seriously discussed both in the Diet and in the Press. But the problem is by no means solved.

##### 5. PREROGATIVES OF THE EMPEROR

There are two instruments by which the Emperor's power is both fortified and restricted. One is the

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XI, in Nakano, *Ordinance Power of the Japanese Emperor*.

Constitution, which, being emphatically a *constitution octroyée*, to borrow a term applied to Louis XVIII's gift, naturally formulates and<sup>1</sup> allows an extensive scope of authority, besides unformulated residual power, to the sovereign. The other is the so-called Imperial House Law, which was issued simultaneously with the Constitution on the 11th of February, 1889. These two make up the jural basis of the Japanese monarchy. They are mutually complementary, and either of them is incomprehensible without the other. Here again we notice the two currents of ideas, sometimes intermingling and sometimes running parallel with each other, in the life of the nation. As typified in the coronation ceremony, where there is an esoteric semi-religious, time-honoured rite of succession to the throne, and an open, public, modern ceremony, with all the paraphernalia of the twentieth century—exemplified at the inception of New Japan, when the restoration of the ancient rule meant also the adoption of the new regime—so is the framework of the constitutional Government supported by two pillars, the one upholding the rights of the oldest dynasty in the world, and the other holding out to the people rights, to a consciousness of which they have been newly aroused. According to Prince Ito, "the Constitution is a collection of the fundamental rules of the State, and lays down clear definitions of the relations that ought mutually to exist between the sovereign and his people," whereas the Imperial House Law is an exposition of the instructions transmitted through successive reigns of the royal family, and is intended to be a guide to posterity for all time. However, these are far more than instructions or rules regulating the private affairs of a family. They relate to the upkeep and welfare, to the rights and privileges,

of the ruling dynasty, and are therefore of the utmost political significance. An emanation of the Constitution, it is none the less an independent document, and contains principles which are stated in other countries in their national Constitutions, but which are omitted from that of Japan. To give but one example—the succession to the throne is, in Great Britain, defined in the Act of Settlement, and, in most other monarchies, in their Constitutions. But in Japan, the Constitution, in Article II, merely refers to the House Law on this matter. It says that the reason why provisions relating to it “are not expressed in the Constitution shows that no interference of the subject shall ever be tolerated regarding them.”

The privileges of the Emperor and those of his family, in their relation as private persons to the people, are laid down in the House Law. There is no doubt that no other constitutional monarchies existing at present allow such a wide latitude of power to the sovereign. And there was a time, some thirty years ago, when, alarmed at the prospect of Anarchism and Communism, the over-zealous loyalists hedged the Imperial Court about with formality and mummary, and acquired for the Crown, in the name of dynastic permanence and social safety, vast tracts of forests and arable lands. Some ultra-loyalists would make a god of the Emperor and enforce his worship on the sequacious populace. But a saner counsel has since prevailed. Instead of inspiring awe, the Royal Family has come to win affection. By methods not mentioned in the House Law or the Constitution, they command universal respect. Not by political manœuvres, but by quiet and dignified behaviour, do they exercise an immense influence on and in society. The visit of the Emperor to England

in 1921, as Crown Prince, the subsequent sojourn of his brother, Prince Chichibu, in Oxford, have had a marked effect on the attitude of the ruling family towards the general public, who, in turn, much to the surprise of the timid loyalists, reciprocate by sincere respect and rational obeisance.

Von Holst, in his study of the American Constitution, saw in almost every paragraph a menace to democracy by the possible exercise of the power allotted (by implication) to the President; but no occupant of the White House has ever availed himself of all the authority he is allowed to wield. Whoever reads the Japanese Constitution and the Imperial House Law may share the German publicist's anxiety about the abuse of prerogatives which the Japanese sovereign possesses by right, divine and human. Our Imperial Family enjoys a measure of super-constitutional right. Certainly what concerns it lies beyond the pale of the Constitution. Reciprocally, the House Law can in no wise affect the Constitution. In case an amendment to the Constitution is desired, the project must be submitted by the Emperor to the Diet. He, being the supreme authority, reserves to himself the right of initiative, but, when he sees the vital significance to the nation of any new move, he will lay it before its representatives for discussion and adoption.

Perhaps no article of the Constitution gives a stronger impression of the arbitrariness of the Imperial prerogatives than the ninth, according to which "the Emperor issues, or causes to be issued, the Ordinance necessary for the carrying out of the laws, or for the maintenance of the public peace and order, and the promotion of the welfare of the subject." This article, especially the last clause, certainly connotes a wide extension of the sovereign's

power; for usually, in Europe, ordinances are confined to the execution of the law, whereas in Japan they may encroach upon the field of legislation, and may thus nullify or contradict the action of the Diet. It cannot be denied that Ministers have at times been tempted to take undue advantage of this provision, but never without calling forth severe criticism. The welfare of the people is a comprehensive object, and embraces mainly such activities as belong to the competence of the Home Minister—for instance, the building and care of roads, sanitary establishments, etc. The work of maintaining public peace and order is also so comprehensive that it can very easily be abused by an unscrupulous constabulary, as has, indeed, often been done by partisan appointees in times of election.

#### 6. THE ELDER STATESMEN AND THE PRIVY COUNCIL

The Emperor, far from being an absolute monarch, as a cursory view of the Constitution may give an impression, is in reality bound by well-established usages to at least two bodies of advisers, one existing by natural and the other by artificial selection. The former is a small body of picked statesmen who have proved themselves by long and faithful service to be worthy of absolute confidence. These are the *genrō*, previously referred to, and are also known as the Elder Statesmen. They do indeed deserve the epithet, as they have usually been septuagenarians. No provision is made in any statute for a public office like theirs. The Regulations of Civil Service know nothing about them. They came into being by a process of natural selection from among the numerous men who have served the State in some public capacity. At one time there were six, but their number has been diminished by death and not

replenished by new members. They form the confidential advisers of the Emperor, who, in moments of crisis which involve delicate personal questions or some momentous decision, calls them into intimate conference. Being constitutionally an anomaly, they have inevitably been criticized by legalists as wholly unnecessary and inconsistent with a constitutional Government. A satirical remark of La Roche that old men like to give good precepts to make amends for being no longer able to set bad examples, applies to most of them; but under the regimen which does not make the Ministry responsible to the Diet, and which therefore does not require an outgoing Premier to recommend his successor, who can act as sponsor for the next Cabinet better than a patriarch or a company of patriarchs?

The strongest objection made to them is that they impede the lawful working of the constitutional machinery; and to this it has been answered, that a new machine, working according to law only, is not always safe or efficient, and that it requires an experienced mechanic to run it smoothly.

Contradictory as it may seem, the contribution which the *genrō* have made to the evolution of representative government in Japan has been on the whole beneficial. Just what advice on the many perplexing questions that have arisen they may have given to His Majesty "within the nine-fold fences," the public does not know; but the advice they gave whenever there was a Cabinet crisis was generally sane and timely. Until ministerial changes can be accomplished automatically, as in England, there must be some authority to whom the sovereign can turn for guidance.

If the *genrō* is a power *ex machinâ*, the Crown is provided by the Constitution with a body of



counsellors, the *Sumitsu-In*, or Privy Council. The identity of its name should not mislead us to regard it as a Japanese reproduction or equivalent of the British institution. Nothing is further from actual fact, as it stands at present. Whereas the British prototype, once so powerful, is now only a sort of honorary body, *Sumitsu-In*, on the contrary, wields an immense and sometimes an overpowering influence.

The Japanese Privy Council is a purely consultative organization, whose duty it is to deliberate upon important matters of State, when asked to do so by the Emperor. The Privy Council may not meet of its own accord. It is called together by the Emperor at the instance of the Cabinet. Except on a few clearly stated subjects, the Cabinet is left free to choose what questions shall be submitted to the discussion of the Council.

The Privy Council consists of not more than twenty-six nominees of the Crown, and has its own president and vice-president. The members, who must be over forty years of age, are chosen from all walks of life—lawyers, diplomats, administrators, scientists, generals, admirals. The members of the Imperial Family have the right to participate in the meetings of the Council, and the Cabinet members have seats *ex-officio*.

Unlike the British system, the Cabinet and the Privy Council in Japan are two separate and widely different institutions. Originally created to examine the draft of the Imperial Constitution, the most important function of the Privy Council is still the interpretation of its articles. The Constitution of Japan being, as has been remarked more than once, bestowed upon the people by the throne, it is incumbent upon the Privy Council to express judgment, in case the Government disputes with the Diet over the

interpretation of any of its articles. The Privy Council is the highest authority on this matter. It serves as the consultative organ of the Imperial House, and, as such, it can even decide some questions—as, for instance, regarding the appointment of a regent. It also furnishes the throne with a supreme board of advisers on all questions of special importance, particularly those concerning foreign relations. The ratification of treaties appertains to the Imperial prerogative, and they are brought before this body for final decision. All acts of legislation proposed by the Government are submitted to it before they are introduced in the Diet.

Though its conclusions are not binding on the Throne or on the Cabinet, its discussions, which are held in strict privacy and provoke very frank expression of opinion, possess great weight. The members of this body are placed in a particularly favourable position in respect to speech, as they are withheld from participating in practical politics and are responsible to no one.

Beginning as an advisory body, pure and simple, with little power, the *Sûmitsu-In* has steadily grown in influence, thanks to the personnel of its members and of its early presidents. Under the leadership of the late Prince Yamagata, who was averse to parliamentary government, the Council was made a citadel of reaction; its authority was greatly increased, and its competence so enlarged as to include matters pertaining to the appointment of public servants above a certain grade, the reform and organization of Government offices, the revision of ordinances relating to secondary and higher education.

How long the Privy Council will continue to exercise its present power has been more than once

questioned. Its British namesake has long ago entered a state of senescence. Its nearest analogue, the Prussian Geheimrath, died a natural death with the Hohenzollern monarchy. Its existence in Japan is so intricately bound up with the Constitution, that its abolition is out of the question; but public respect for its authority weakens with every mistaken step it takes. Undue interference in administration impairs its dignity. The indulgence by some of its members in unrestrained speeches, as these have leaked through the walls of the august chamber, have diminished popular respect for the knowledge and wisdom they profess. Certainly its usefulness will decline with the fuller development of constitutional government, unless it is replenished with fresh talents of generally recognized calibre and of high moral integrity.

Dr. Minobé, one of the highest authorities on Constitutional Law, is of the opinion that many of the functions now executed by the Privy Council should, and would better, be relegated to the Diet. As a matter of fact, questions which ought to have been taken up by the Council were often settled by the Cabinet, and this practice gives a hope that in future the same course may be continued and, moreover, suggests that the Council may prove itself less and less useful. Even its quasi-political importance of being the sole organ for guarding the safety, welfare and rights of the Imperial Household is not beyond controversy; for no nation is more genuinely interested in the well-being and prosperity of the Throne than is the Japanese. There have been instances in our history of a family, a clique or a cabal endangering the welfare of the reigning House, but never such menace from the people. What the Privy Council can do, the Diet should be able to do

—and what the former cannot do, the latter may be empowered to do.

## 7. THE HOUSE OF PEERS

That the House of Peers is a comparatively old institution in a modified form, has already been explained. From its first inception as *Genrō-In* (Senate), in 1875, to its present form, it has passed through several stages of development—happily not in a reactionary, but always in a democratic, direction, which fact presages well its further reform. It has at present nominally 401 members, who may be classified as hereditary, nominative and elective.

The first category includes the peers of blood royal who have reached majority, and the two higher grades of the nobility—namely, princes and marquises—above thirty years of age. The three lower grades of the nobility—counts, viscounts and barons—send their representatives by election for a term of seven years. As there are about 970 titled families and nearly 200 members chosen to represent them, an average of five families have a common spokesman. The second group, comprising nearly half of the House, are persons nominated by the Emperor—on the advice of the Prime Minister—for erudition or for some meritorious service to the State. As these nominees, 125 in number, and nominated for life, are men of distinguished career, they are usually of advanced age, and the vacancies created by their demise are recruited from among a large number of candidates on the waiting list. Too frequently is nomination made of people who serve the party in power by supplying it with funds, rather than the State by honourable service—a matter glaringly apparent. The third category consists of representatives of property, chiefly large landowners, who pay direct

national tax of £30 and upward and who are over forty years of age. A certain number of the highest tax-payers of each prefecture form an electoral group and send one deputy to the House, normally for seven years. As the post has much honour attached to it, these representatives of wealth not infrequently make an arrangement among themselves whereby the successful candidate occupies the seat for a couple of years and retires, for some plausible reason, to give place to another. Since wealth is far from representing erudition or intelligence, or even interest in public affairs, this category of members, whose number in the House may not exceed sixty-six, is often made the butt of merciless wits. Not so is the other class of elected members, who, four in number, are chosen by the Imperial Academy from among its members.

The House is composed at present of the following groups :—

Princes of the blood . . . . .	16
Peerage Princes . . . . .	13
Marquises . . . . .	31
Counts . . . . .	18
Viscounts . . . . .	64
Barons . . . . .	66
Imperial Academy representatives . . . . .	4
Imperial nominees . . . . .	125
Highest tax payers' representatives . . . . .	66

The object of the House of Peers is to preserve an equilibrium in political power, in order to restrain the undue influence of popular parties and to check the evil tendencies of irresponsible decisions in the Lower House—thus to secure the stability of the Constitution. It is meant to be a supervisory and even a suspensory Chamber. Prince Ito conceived the function of the Upper House as the representative of the nation's prudence, experience and stability.

These are psychological elements less to be expected in a popular Assembly. This does not preclude the Upper House from ignoring its larger function—namely, of representing, together with the Lower House, the public opinion of the country.

At no time did this function of the Peers come more vividly into prominence than in the spring of 1930, when Baron Tanaka was practically (though not constitutionally) impeached on the floor of the Upper Chamber. His party had a plurality, but not a majority, in the Lower House, and that even this small plurality was bought was made no secret. In fact, as far as the gross number of individual votes was concerned, the Opposition had secured more in the election. The plurality therefore did not represent the popular will of the time. It was both artificial and fabricated. Under these circumstances, when Bills passed the Lower House and were rejected in the Upper, or when a non-confidence resolution, crushed in the Lower House, was in a way resuscitated in the Upper, the Peers fulfilled their mission of voicing the public sentiment of the nation.

The two Houses possess equal powers except in that of initiatory right respecting the Budget, which is relegated to the Lower House. Neither House is by itself alone competent to engage in matters of legislation. But this avowedly liberal character of the Upper House is greatly obscured by other characteristics which impart to it the appearance of an advisory board to the Throne. The Constitution itself (Art. 34) provides that the House of Peers shall be constituted according to the Ordinance of the House—that is to say, the House stands out of the pale of the legislative power of the Diet, but is placed under the jurisdiction of the executive. This must not be construed, however, as meaning that

the House is subservient to the Government, for it is provided that no change in the Ordinance relating to the House of Peers can be effected without the agreement of the House itself. Moreover, as the House is not subject to dissolution, it can well afford to be free and independent in its opinions. Its independent status is capable of giving infinite scope for abuses; but a wholesome check is found in the exercise of common sense, of etiquette and of the knightly sense of honour.

Although the House of Peers was primarily modelled after the English pattern, it was at the same time the result of many experiments aiming at a higher organ of legislation, as we have seen in the previous chapter. Its predecessors were superior in the calibre of their members, consisting as they did of men appointed for their high qualifications, whereas the present House contains, for the moiety of its members, hereditary nobility—a social class not particularly famed for its intellect or public spirit. Be it said to their credit, however, that since a large majority—three-fourths—of the peer members are elected, in their respective classes, they are by no means inferior in character or intelligence to the rest of the House.

From its very nature, the House of Peers should not be divided into or by parties, and though the nominated members almost invariably belong to or sympathize with the party of the Cabinet that recommended them, a large number are not affiliated with any political organization. In the House itself are half a dozen groupings, rather loosely organized according to the grade of noble rank represented (such as the group of counts, of viscounts, of barons), or joined by the same political views, with no well-defined reason for flocking together except that they are somewhat of the same feather. There are six

such groups besides the Independents. The largest and the most consolidated of these groups is known as the *Kenkyukai*, which wields immense power—chiefly on account of its numbers. Its membership consists of more than one-third of the entire House. It has earned for itself uncomplimentary names, which it seems regrettably to merit. Having no political platform of its own, it coquets with every new Ministry, running now with the hare, then hunting with the hounds, according as it can bring most grist to the mill.

The question of the reform of the House of Peers has long been urged, both from without and from within the House itself. The more radical reformers have advocated its total abolition. Concrete plans have been suggested, and something will be done at no distant future. The points most commonly discussed in the reform of the House are : (1) the reduction of the number of its members ; (2) the abolition of stipends ; (3) the proportion of the titled members to be reduced, and the method of electing them to be revised ; (4) the appointment of Imperial nominees not to be left to the arbitrary choice of the Cabinet ; (5) the age limit of members to be fixed ; (6) the term of membership to be limited.

Though the House of Peers was conceived after the pattern of the British House of Lords, the charges made against the former are not of the same nature as those of which the latter is accused. The Japanese House is not, perhaps, powerful or independent enough to be greatly feared or vehemently hated. It is not even criticized severely enough. The usual accusation directed against it has been on the ground of hebetude and senility. This is more or less justified when it refers to the Imperial nominees, but the youthfulness of so many members of the nobility



will surely give the lie to the accusation. It is nevertheless true that the counsel of the older members usually prevails, and, if the House has not set the nation on fire, neither has it done any harm—except, perhaps, to itself. With progress in democracy, stronger objections than senility and hereditary titles will be advanced for the reform of the House of Peers. When it is reconstructed on a more “popular basis,” without thereby sinking into a mouth-piece of popular passions or of partisan interests, it will be turned into an ornamental revisory body. It is well to hearken to Baron Joseph Eötvös’ warning to the effect that, on the grounds of both theory and fact, in so far as an Upper House uses its power to defend the interests of the wealthy against the will and interest of the whole nation, in that proportion will it forfeit confidence and lose power.<sup>1</sup> In a legislative House where nominated members play an important rôle, one very common danger is that it is subject to “swamping” opposition by appointing members favourable to the Government. In Japan the same danger is present, but not to the same extent as the appointment of wealthy citizens who have done yeoman service to a political party. Every year the proportion of the plutocrats increases.

#### 8. ELECTORAL SYSTEM AND PARTY PSYCHOLOGY

As the election law in Japan does not form an integral part of the Constitution, it is possible and easy to revise it from time to time according to the progress of popular demands. The original law dates back to 1890, when a property qualification fixed the minimum amount of tax at £1 : 10 for the voter and £1 for the candidate for election. The law was

<sup>1</sup> *Einfluss der herrschenden Ideen des 19. Jahrh. auf dem Staat*, Vol. 1, Bk. 2, Cap. 13, p. 161.

revised in 1900, when the property qualification for the candidate was cancelled and the limit was reduced for the voter to £1. In 1910, it was further lowered to about one-third, or 3 Yen. In 1925, property qualification was entirely abolished, and general manhood suffrage was introduced—after having been the bone of bitterest contention as a party issue. The age limit has remained the same from the inauguration of the system until the present time—namely, at twenty-five years for the voter and thirty for the candidate. It is likely that female suffrage will follow very soon, as all parties seem willing to court favour with the gentle sex by offering that which costs them nothing. Woman suffrage will bring some 12,000,000 new voters to the polls, if they really care to take up their share of a citizen's duties.

Thus far the number of electors has naturally risen at every successive revision—from 50,000 in 1890, to thrice that number in 1910 and to 3,000,000 in 1920. To-day it is calculated to be nearly 13,000,000.

There are other features in the election laws which show steady advance in democracy. The number of members of the House of Representatives has increased from 300, in 1890, to 464 at present. Many classes of people who in the beginning were not eligible for the franchise on account of their profession—such as students, teachers, priests and some categories of State officials—are now given the right. As far as the number of electoral districts—now only 122—is concerned, these have been greatly diminished on account of the recent adoption of the system of middle electoral districts, according to which the number of members for each district varies from three to five, at the rate of one member for every 120,000 of the population.

In the general election of 1928, 466 members were returned by the ballot of 9,866,198 voters, giving each successful candidate an average of 21,272 votes. As a matter of fact, there were 966 candidates. Of the successful ones, the party in power, the *Seiyukai*, counted 218, and its rival, the *Minseito*, 216. But the total number of votes cast for the latter was 4,270,497, which was about 20,000 more than those cast for the dominant party. If we add together all those members who were decidedly opposed to the *Seiyukai* (ignoring such as were not expressly hostile), we get 224 members, representing over 4,750,621 voters, and outnumbering the Government party by half a million. This apparent anomaly is like the English election of October 1924, when 413 were returned for the Conservative side and only 191 for the Opposition, notwithstanding the fact that over a million more votes were registered for the latter. A flagrant example of imperfection in this mechanical contrivance of democracy !

While we are on the subject of elections, we may remark that the proportion of voters who abstained from exercising their franchise in 1928 amounted to less than 20 per cent. An appreciable decrease of abstention in the second general election (Feb. 1930) is considered an index of the growth of political interest and intelligence on the part of the populace. Of the 12,650,513 voters registered in the country, 2,063,253, or 16·3 per cent., abstained from voting. This shows a decrease of abstention by 3·3 per cent. as compared with the election in 1928.

The remarkable attendance at the polls has been a subject of many laudatory comments both within and without the country. It is impossible to assign exact reasons for this phenomenon. That scandalous buying and selling of tickets was practised—often

beyond the power of the police to detect, but sometimes with their connivance—there seems to be no doubt. A still more reprehensible use of force on the part of the party in power is also fairly well attested. It is generally admitted that the *Seiyukai* is largely responsible for the abuses and corruption introduced into politics, and yet—because of its power, moneyed power in particular—it has maintained its ascendancy longest of all political parties. This being so, weaker brethren are easily allured where lucre abounds. Already, several members elected on the Opposition ticket have betrayed their constituents and have entered the camp of their former opponents. Especially is this true with those who ran on neutral tickets.

While thus the contest of political parties gives one an impression of corruption and utter lack of conscience, it is a good omen of probable progress in democracy and public morals that small groups of honest politicians, with elevated notions of their calling and sincerely desirous of political reforms, are not altogether absent from the Diet. They consist of idealists and of Labour men, or proletarians, as they call themselves. Whether the spirit of would-be reformers will recoil at the sight of a market where souls are being bought and sold, will go a long way to prove the capacity of the race for real democracy. It is noticeable that the small liberal and progressive bands contain scarcely a lawyer or a hard-boiled professional politician. They are composed of comparatively young men, of university education, and of some older men of distinguished social service and unsullied character.

One curious fact which escapes the attention of cursory observers of our public life, but which has been clearly pointed out by Dr. Fujisawa (whose

volume on the first general election (1928) is the masterpiece of a mathematical and political student), is the steady upward trend in the age of our parliamentarians since the Diet was first opened in 1890. Making allowance for the varying number of the members at different sessions of the Diet, those between the ages of thirty and forty has gradually decreased. Of such there were only thirty-seven in 1928; those between forty and fifty have remained (except in the years 1894-1915) about the same—*i.e.*, about 150 to 180. There has been a steadily larger showing of older people, those of fifty to sixty years increasing from forty-seven in 1890 to 162 in 1928, and those above sixty from seventeen to eighty-seven.

In the new Diet, elected in February 1930, again—men above forty years of age constitute the main portion. The oldest member is the leader of the Opposition, who is seventy-six. The youngest is thirty-four. Graded according to their ages, those of forty to forty-nine years total 166, closely followed by those between fifty and fifty-nine, who number 164. Not to be despised are the sexagenarians, who number 107. There are eight septuagenarians. On the contrary, we count only twenty-one members under forty, whereas in the first session of the Diet (1890) they were as many as 239 out of the total number of 300. What does this signify?—It signifies many things. Among others, it shows that more mature and experienced men are now coming to the legislature, whereas, in earlier days, the institution itself being new, the older men did not dare to manipulate it, nor did they trust in it. On the other hand, it would appear that idealism is waning, and that politics is becoming a profession, most successfully carried on by those who make a living thereby and who are familiar with the ins and outs of the

trade. After giving detailed statistics, Dr. Fujisawa says : " The above table clearly shows the increase with the successive elections of the age-complex, *i.e.*, the preponderance of older men among the members of the House of Representatives. Contrary to the sanguine expectation of most people, and in contrast with the opposite phenomena to be observed in the case of the British election of 1924, which has often been characterized as the triumph of youth, the increase of age-complex is, to our great disappointment, particularly marked in the case of the first manhood suffrage election. This fact seems to point to the source of stagnancy in the political tendencies of the present day."

#### 9. PRESENT STATUS OF PARTIES

Though their names have changed more than once, the two largest political parties now existing trace their history back to the *Jiyû-to* and the *Kaishinto*. The former was succeeded by the *Seiyukai* and the latter by the *Minseito*.

The party lines between these two major groupings have been so closely drawn on many points that it has often been difficult to distinguish between them. The difference has not been so much in their avowed purposes as in their temperament, if we speak of the temperament of corporate bodies. Merely to look at the banners which the two camps are flying, one cannot tell what they really mean : but " by their fruits ye shall know them," for their actions reveal their temperaments.

The general election of 1930 cleared away somewhat the clouds that obscured the platforms on which they stood. A brief description of that period will give an idea of what they are like, though no one will hold a brief for the statement as applying to-morrow,

since party lines are ever shifting or else crossed back and forth by individual members. It argues a sad lack of public responsibility when members change their party affiliation after they are elected on a definite platform, without duly reporting the altered stand to their constituencies. The only party that has shown any degree of stability is the *Seiyukai*, which, as we have seen, began with an honourable history when started under another name by Itagaki, became distinguished under the leadership of Prince Ito and Marquis Saionji, and then grew powerful under the administration of Hara. After the latter's assassination, in 1921, there was a sudden degeneration, and it is of late fast forfeiting its proud record. It maintains its prestige chiefly by its command over financial resources which are obscure in their origin.

The *Minseito* has practically changed its name several times, according as it has absorbed other parties or has been absorbed by them. Some original threads are still clearly visible in the fabric of this organization—threads contributed by Marquis Okuma, Prince Katsura and Count Kato. It is strongly tinged with Liberalism.

We have seen that these two major parties secured nearly the same number of votes in the general election. Within a year, several members of the latter body either deserted it or boldly went over to the stronger side. One prominent member, Tokonami, suddenly bolted and created a small party of his own, which, after an ephemeral existence of a few months, amalgamated with the *Seiyukai*. In their pronouncement of foreign or domestic policy, the party leaders repeat very much the same declarations. Take, for instance, the Sino-Japanese relations. All the parties unite in "protecting our rights and interests in China," "in extending moral

support and unqualified sympathy for China's effort for pacification and unification." None of them comes out with any hint at megalomania. As to domestic policy, they all agree that agriculture must be aided, trade and industries encouraged, education improved. About the only subject on which conflicting opinions are expressed refers to some alterations in the system of taxation; but the alterations, as proposed, imply scarcely any principle, though it was at first rumoured they were motivated by a desire for decentralization.

Perhaps the easiest way to distinguish the two major parties is to give the election manifestos which they issued early in 1930.

Of the ten fundamental issues which the *Minseito* advocated, it claims to have carried out two regarding a retrenchment policy, thus reducing the number to eight since coming into power in the summer of 1929 :

1. Straightforwardness of administration and strict observance of official discipline.
2. Electoral reform.
3. Policy after the removal of the gold embargo :
  - (a) Financial curtailment and readjustment of bonds.
  - (b) Increase of efficiency and rationalization of industry.
  - (c) Increase of export trade and improvement of international accounts.
  - (d) Protection of the gold standard.
4. Decrease of burden on the people and stabilization of their living.
  - (a) Readjustment and reduction of national and local taxes.



(b) Readjustment and reduction of excise taxes for daily necessities.

(c) Increase in the funds from the national Treasury for primary educational expenses.

5. Execution of the social welfare policy.

(a) Advancement of the standard of living of workers and rationalization of the relations of capital and labour.

(b) Prevention of unemployment and relief of the unemployed, improvement of dwelling-houses, protection of children and social insurance.

6. Improvement of monetary circulation and increase of financial facilities for merchants, farmers and industrialists of medium and small means.

7. Improvement of agricultural communities.

(a) Improvement of supply of fertilizers.

(b) Encouragement and maintenance of farmers who own the land on which they work.

(c) Solution of the problem of farmer tenancy.

(d) Development of agricultural, fishing and mountainous communities.

8. Improvement of education.

(a) Education made practical.

(b) Development of originality and individuality.

The *Seiyukai* has gone a step further than the *Minseito* in the reduction of the number of fundamental political aims, by making the number seven instead of eight as follows :—

1. Policy for facing the business depression following the removal of the gold embargo ;

Under this head, the following are regarded as urgently necessary and indispensable :—

(a) Abatement of extreme economy of consumption ;

(b) Improvement of financial facilities for merchants and the industrialists of medium and small means ;

(c) Improvement of international accounts ;

(d) Development of domestic industry ;

(e) Revision of the tax system, with a view to developing industry ;

(f) Co-ordination of various industries ;

(g) Issue of bonds for control of streams, improvement of ports, harbours, roads and other productive enterprises ;

(h) Abatement of unemployment.

## 2. National defence.

After the result of the London Naval Conference is known, necessary steps will be taken for the limitation and reduction of the navy. As for the army, the following steps will be taken :—

(a) Readjustment of the standing army ;

(b) Reduction of the years of service in the barracks ;

(c) Abolition or amalgamation of Government schools for the army ;

(d) Readjustment of special service corps.

## 3. Administrative readjustment.

(a) Revision or abolition of system and regulations for the establishment of local self-government ;

(b) Abolition or amalgamation of Cabinet Offices, bureaux and sections ;

(c) Improvement of accountant service ;

(d) Readjustment of administrative service distribution ;

(e) Increase of the efficiency of the vice-ministers and other routine service officials, by guaranteeing their positions.

4. Readjustment of the Government enterprises.

The method of management of public enterprises will be improved, and any of them which would be better operated by private enterprise will be so readjusted. The fund secured in this way will be strictly segregated and appropriated for social welfare work, after consultation with a commission of inquiry.

5. Reduction of taxes.

As preliminary steps towards the transfer of the land and business profit taxes, the present rates of land, business profit and excise taxes will be reduced.

6. Policy as to the price of rice.

The cereals law will be revised, so that in case the price of rice should fall extraordinarily, thereby causing agricultural communities to suffer, the law thus revised may be resorted to in such a way that, even when the rice held by the Government has reached a certain fixed amount, the Government may purchase rice in the domestic market and seek a market for it abroad, the national Treasury shouldering any loss which may occur in the deal. At the same time, the Government will establish a policy of reducing prices of fertilizers with a view to reducing the cost of the production of rice.

7. Electoral reform.

(a) Prevention of corruption by bribery in elections ;

(b) Public management of elections with a view to reducing their cost ;

- (c) Extension of suffrage ;
- (d) System of proportionate representation.

The public announcement of their programme is a very small part of the activities of the parties. The planks are, in the eyes of the public, no more than a signboard of "a mutton shop where horse flesh is sold." The debates in the Diet betray the real nature of the party men, in whose breasts party interests reign supreme. Beneath most of the high-sounding patriotic declamations heard on the floor one catches the real note of thirst for power. One seldom hears a sportsman-like view in parliamentary speeches. The old Bushidô sense of honour forsakes the talking machine. One nearly despairs of party politics in Japan, and is painfully reminded of Mr. Lawrence Lowell's words : " In a community which has enough native honesty and intelligence to prevent personal corruption in its public men, and which does not require the friction of parties to stimulate progress, it is certainly a great advantage to get rid of the agitation, the partisanship, and the absence of a perfectly ingenuous expression of opinion, which are inseparable from party government."

The *Seiyukai* boasts of itself as being " positive " in its policy. As applied to finances, this consists in granting aids to agriculture and industry on a grandiose scale. If the price of rice fell below a certain mark, the State would make a big purchase and so keep up the price. It would give subsidies to tenant farmers, in order to enable them to become peasant proprietors. The rival party agrees in principle with the programme. They both do the same thing—only on a different scale. If the *Minseito* would avert a financial crisis by advancing £20,000,000 to aid a few banks, the *Seiyukai* would do the same

thing by spending £70,000,000 on more banks. The latter would build new railways, while the former would repair old lines. If money is wanting in the fisc, the *Seiyukai* advocates borrowing, come what may later. It is profuse in its promises to the present generation. It stands for inflation, for high prices, for "boom." It assumes a strong attitude in regard to any threats made against the Japanese subjects residing, or on the Japanese interests invested, in China. This is the reason why this party is feared by the Chinese as aggressive and imperialistic.

As opposed to the "positive," the *Minseito* advocates the "negative" policy, though it does not trumpet a term so dismal-sounding. While on questions of social improvement it is not much behind its rival organization, it lays stress on retrenchment in national and local finances. In its foreign policy it refuses to interfere with the internal affairs of any foreign country, however near that country may be to us—hence it is derided as weak.

The two minor groups—one calling itself Reform Party (*Kakushin*) and the other Industrials (*Kokumin Doshikai*)—concentrate their endeavours upon financial problems, with a view to greater economy. These minor parties offer the most definite remedies for the evils from which the country is suffering; but they will perhaps catch the ear of only the more intelligent of the balloting multitude.

The general manhood suffrage of 1928 brought into the limelight new forces hitherto hidden or suppressed. Just as in the general election of Belgium in 1919, of England in 1918, and elsewhere, new parties shot up unexpectedly, so in Japan no less than four Proletarian or Labour parties—is it more proper to call them four factions of one party?—made a rather sudden début. Judging from their

platforms, an outsider might expect the amalgamation of the four factions into one strong unit ; but here again the temperaments of the extreme right and the extreme left are so widely apart that their final union appears hopeless. Their superiority over the older parties lies in the clear declaration of their views on the income and inheritance tax, land reform, labour legislation, disarmament. The left wing is Bolshevik, and is unlikely to agree to any compromise. It is almost violent in its adoration of Lenin. If the present Left should throw him off, those who pick him up will form the next Left

In the general election of 1928, the Proletarian parties, in spite of internal divisions, succeeded in securing nearly half a million votes—a number sufficient to send twenty representatives to the Diet, but these resulted in a harvest of only eight members. They behaved in the House like model parliamentarians in every respect. But in the election of 1930 their number went down to four.

It is almost hopeless to give a list of the names of the four factions, as they change in quick succession. At this moment (May, 1930) they are: (1) The Labourer and Farmers' Party (*Rōnō-tō*), which represents the left wing of the proletarian group, consisting of communistically inclined members with their advanced programmes, borrowed apparently from Moscow; (2) The Great Populace Party (*Nihon Taishūtō*), particularly interested in the reform of the tenant system; (3) The Social Democrats (*Shakai Minshū-Tō*), consisting of the most moderate, the best educated sympathizers with the labouring class, containing scarcely any rural members—with its proposals for better distribution of wealth by means of reforms in the income and inheritance tax; (4) The Nation-Wide Democratic Party (*Zen-koku-Minshū-*

*Tô*), which is an offshoot of the preceding, with a platform not widely differing from theirs, and (5) Local Proletarian Groups (*Chihô-Musan Tô*)—local groups of peasants and working men, not yet formally federated into larger organizations. We shall describe these parties more fully, when we treat of labour and its problems.

Because the Extreme Left professes principles in utter opposition to those which lie at the very foundation of Japanese nationality, and also because it is bent on resorting to violent methods, it was dissolved by police authority—only to be reorganized in a few weeks with slight modifications in its constitution and platform. Those who take the most active part in this movement are usually intellectually inclined youths who have not finished their higher education. Very few are recruited from the labouring classes. They are earnest believers in Marxian philosophy, on which they look as new converts do on their religion. As yet their writings are translations. One wonders if it was not about them that Marx wrote long ago: "When the workers abandon manual labour to become professional writers, they almost always make a mess of the theoretical side." Perhaps it is wise to leave writing to a few better educated. In propaganda and in the extension of party influence, writing is not everything, and rare talents are already making themselves conspicuous in the proletarian community for administration and eloquence, tactics—and, above all, for courage.

The new "proletarian" parties have this advantage—that their leaders are elected from within the parties, instead of being drawn from without, though, just at present, the leaders are selected from among college professors; but, in the long run, a leader born and bred within a party is more faithful to it

and more conversant with its psychology, and will consequently serve it better.

In the light of what has been said of the very vague distinction of party lines, it is not at all difficult to surmise that millions who exercise the franchise cast their vote not for any political principle with any conviction of their own, but from confidence, be it never so lukewarm or ill-founded, in the personal fitness of candidates. The standard for judging this fitness is naturally their antecedents; and, for this reason, given two contestants of equal pretensions in other respects, the older is usually preferred. It would be safer if their characters were more closely scrutinized. Old hands are usually better acquainted with the tricks for cajoling the unsophisticated public.

Another very common reason which decides for a voter the object of his choice is an old provincial tie. It may be the candidate was born in the town where the voter's grandfather had his domicile. Maybe the voter has seen the candidate's portrait and liked it. The personalities of party leaders have a far more marked influence than do the issues at stake, in constituting for the public a dividing line. The programmes officially set forth by parties will of themselves secure them but few votes. How can they, when their distinctions are scarcely discernible?

Taken all in all, however, one observes a decided advancement towards a more rational order in election. As a rule, threats now exercise a contrary effect to that intended. Blackmailing is infinitely less common than formerly. Wily innuendoes are little enjoyed, and frontal attacks on the personal character of rival candidates are fewer. Candidates who two decades ago thought it beneath their dignity to address the masses, now condescend to speak in any meeting. Thanks to universal education, the



audiences of to-day show much higher intelligence than those of a generation ago, though they may embrace all sorts and conditions of men representing the lower strata of society—such as one would never have seen in a meeting aforetime.

The overwhelming victory of the *Minseito* over the *Seiyukai* in 1930 is cited—except, of course, by the beaten party—as another evidence of the growing political consciousness of the general public. The general expectation was that the *Minseito* would win by a small majority; but the difference between the two major parties proved to be no less than ninety-nine, instead of thirty or forty.

Chief among the causes of the *Seiyukai* failure is to be mentioned the maladministration of the Tanaka Cabinet, made notorious by corruption of all kinds, by terrorism tolerated, by the appointment to high offices of men of disrepute and scandalous conduct, by the mistaken steps it took in diplomacy, by reckless spending of public money—in a word, by the Dark Age it introduced in the recent history of Japan.

The mistakes made by Tanaka were perhaps his own, and should not altogether be charged to the party he led; for the programme which it has drawn up for its own guidance contains few of the errors that its leader committed. Indeed his were the sins of omission—omission of what his own party would have had him do, omission to live up to its professed principles. So easy is it for anybody or any party to forget a plain truth so clearly put by Viscount Bryce: “The more a party lives by the principles for which it stands, the more it subordinates its own aims to the strength and unity of the whole people, and the more it is guided by men who can recognize whatever may be sound in the views of their opponents and prevent opposition from passing into

enmity, the better will it serve the common interests of its country."

#### 10. LIBERAL ELEMENT IN JAPANESE POLITICS

Japanese politics are conspicuous by the absence of a Liberal element in the sense in which that term is used in England. Of the many shibboleths imported from that country, Liberalism has thus far failed to take deep root, though this does not prove that it never will. A principle so pregnant, so vital, will not die.

Montesquieu, in his day, introduced the British idea of Liberty among his people. It thrived luxuriantly in the new soil, beyond the sower's control, and how many crimes were committed in its name. We may be thankful that we fared better when not only the English original, but also the French version of this primal political doctrine, found their way to us in the early days of Meiji. The two old parties—the *Jiyû-to* and the *Kaishinto*—began their march under the banner of Liberty and Progress, as their very names indicate. The latter flourished under the guidance of Okuma: its platform and its personnel were clearly Liberal, advocating the doctrines of Bentham, Austin and John Stuart Mill. The former, led by Itagaki, was deeply tinged with the advanced views of French Radicalism. The fight between the two was a miniature repetition of the controversy that once took place across the Dover Channel. Bitter was this conflict, and the two camps were exhausting their ammunition, when the advocates of a new principle took advantage of the situation and weakened them both so completely that the very cause of "Liberalism" was jeopardized.

About the middle of the eighties, Ito turned the trend of political thought into the new channel of German bureaucracy. This was fatal to Liberal

ideas, but was justified by the vast improvements it brought about in administration. People ceased to talk about abstract principles, except the Hegelian doctrine of the State. They valued government for its efficiency. Seeing, however, that a Government must have its basis in public opinion, Ito practically bought the *Jiyû-to*, and, changing its name into *Seiyukai*, made of it an official organ. The *Kaishinto* held its own for some time, struggling against odds, for its rival could command money and violence. Continued ill success decimated its ranks. Some of its leaders began to waver, and, like Chinese generals, jumped into the enemies' saddles, while even those who remained true to their original advocacy of Liberty could show to their credit nothing that could compare with the achievements of an efficient bureaucracy. Moreover, the Imperial Constitution itself dodged, as it were, the Liberal implication of the Charter Oath. The notion of personal liberty in the minds of those who framed the Constitution was a negative one. "They understood," says a Japanese writer, "civil liberty to be immunity from the unjust interference of a Government not responsible to the people."

I dare say that in England itself it is by no means a dead issue, nor is the seed sown in early Meiji altogether dead. An ancient Japanese poet says :—

" Sow, simply sow the seed ;  
For as long as the year has its autumn  
It will bear fruit—  
If only the root survive—  
Though the flower has withered."

The Charter Oath is the certificate of its sowing. The many laws and institutions that shot up in the seventies and eighties are evidences that it took root. There is no denying that its flowers withered under

the blast of bureaucracy, and, later, of Socialism. It will, one mellow autumn day, bear fruit—if only the root survive. Hence the question is reduced to this, Is there a root of Liberalism in our scheme of political life? Or, to put it more broadly, let us ask if there is a sense of Liberty in our conception of life?

The idea of Liberty has been neither a historical inheritance nor a psychological libido of our people. The reciprocal actions of the history and the psychology of a nation are so interwoven that it is impossible to unravel the warp from the woof. But when neither the one nor the other gives clear proof of the existence of Liberalism as such, we may admit that it is a new conception. We need not be ashamed of this. We ought to be ashamed if we cannot foster and acclimatize an exotic plant so useful and so fair.

We have seen that it was once duly sown with royal sanction, that it began to grow, and then that it was practically nipped in the bud. Let us also remember that it was first sown only in fertile soil and to a limited extent. The seedlings have not had time to be transplanted to broader acres. The public were not ready for its reception. They were certainly attracted by the terms Liberty and Equality, but they were not prepared to exercise that "eternal vigilance" which is the price of these rights. They were most grateful for the gifts that the ruler conferred on them in the Charter Oath, but they knew not how to profit by them. They left it in the hands of bureaucrats. So much is history, and it is backed by psychology.

The notion of Liberty is impossible of full appreciation without a previous realization of Personality; but into this mysterious region Oriental philosophy took its votaries too far, allowing them scant

communion with the sublunary world. The idea of Liberty proceeding from sources other than the right and reverent conception of Personality—personal rights and personal responsibilities—is apt to exceed its proper bounds and to succumb to licence, which is the negation of personal dignity and self-control and of that freedom of will which is the highest attribute of the human soul.

The individualistic character of the British race has developed the doctrine and practice of self-government. The communal temper of the Japanese, on the contrary, has led it to find enjoyment and satisfaction in obeying behests of a superior, whether these emanate from a sovereign or from an autocracy or from a long-continued custom.

Lacking the philosophical basis of Personality and the historical experience of Liberty, Liberalism has thus far blossomed among us only in a narrow circle. To-day, roughly speaking, reactionary Conservatism, whatever be its name, and rank Radicalism divide the political arena in this country between them. Neither party commands the confidence or the respect of the general public. The sober elements of society are tired with the present run of affairs. They are waiting for a sane, solid, common-sense enunciation of a new political principle. Such a principle is best expressed in Mr. Wilson's maxim, *New Freedom*.

Though the doctrine of Liberty, when first sown, found lodgment only in a few minds, education has since spread it under various names among the people at large. They now know better what it means. With the growth of the sense of Personality, they cannot fail to see that Liberty is the gift which was promised in the Charter Oath. As their knowledge of existing party platforms grows, they are sure

to discover that it was largely the politicians who obscured the meaning of the Charter Oath. The only logical outcome of present circumstances will be the appearance of a new movement which shall stand, first of all, for the rights of individual freedom, for moderation in political action, and, finally, for the recognition of the supreme worth of human personality.

## II. THE COMING REFORM

Japanese historians speak of "Three Great Reforms" in the political career of their nation. In other countries they would be called "revolutions"; but here this word is so associated with the breakdown or the setting up of different dynasties that it is misleading to apply it to any upheaval in our history.

The Three Great Reforms alluded to are: (1) that of the Taika period in the seventh century, which saw the initiation of an orderly system of administration modelled entirely after the Chinese pattern; (2) that of the Kamakura period in the twelfth century, which inaugurated the Shogunacy that lasted for seven hundred years; (3) that of the Meiji era (1868 and after), which is usually called the *Ishin* or the Renewal.

Now that the Second *Ishin*—the reforms which are to glorify the present era—is being discussed, let us ask what light the record of the past will throw upon the probable character of the coming changes. Let us study the more prominent and permanent features that have characterized the epoch-making changes on which we look back as landmarks of our national progress. Each generation has its own functions and demands, and they call for new organs. These make up the bulk of a nation's history. To an

observer who takes a long view of life, there is "nothing new under the sun," and history is but a doleful repetition of the same strivings of man, but little changed generation after generation. But through all the transformations that a nation undergoes in its social and political upheavals, we notice some principles characteristic of the race, remaining almost unaffected by passing vicissitudes.

A slight acquaintance with our history, such as is acquired by the perusal of the former pages, is all that is necessary to discover that the Second Reform—that of the Kamakura Period—is quite different in character from the First or the Third. The inauguration of the Shôgunacy, together with that of the feudal regime, was a deviation from the basic conception of the Japanese state. It was an abnormality, a transgression from the way the nation set out for corporate existence. The orthodox view of the *Kokutai*, the unified state, is the maintenance of the authority of the ruling house. The transference of supremacy to the Shôgun was therefore a reversion, and though it finds a measure of justification in the universal chaos of the time, it was, all the same, an iniquity in principle. As to feudalism, by which term we translate *Hôken*, that is a different matter. The Japanese *Hôken* and the European feudal system are so alike in their process of development and in their general character that they may be identified as the same politico-economic stage in the social evolution of mankind. It is not necessary to stop here to draw parallels between the two. Hegel resorts to very harsh language in passing judgment on the place of feudalism in European history, calling it "the reaction resulting from the antithesis occasioned by that infinite falsehood" which constituted the life and spirit of the Middle Ages. He

calls the fidelity of vassals (*fides, feudum*) implied in the system, "a bond established on unjust principles," since it was not an obligation to the commonwealth, but a private one, subject to the sway of chance, caprice and violence. Hegel does not recognize the force of historic process; he makes little allowance for the materialistic conception of history—and we must admit that feudalism was in its fundamental aspect an economic rather than a political phenomenon. His words on the feudal régime—"The imperial power was extolled . . . but the more exalted the ideal dignity of the emperors, the more limited was it in reality"—sound as though they were the epitome of the result of feudalism in this country.<sup>1</sup> If thus the system proved "an infinite falsehood" in Europe, as judged in the high tribunal of abstract justice, in spite of the fact that it fulfilled a most useful function at the time, with far better reason can we declare that the *Hōken* régime which appeared in our history was "an infinite falsehood." It broke the continuity of the *Kokutai*, thrusting itself between the kingly rule (*Ō-chō*) of the Heian Period and the Restoration of Meiji.

There is, however, a redeeming feature in our feudalism, even if we were to judge it from the viewpoint of moral justice and *Kokutai*. The Shōgun, in distributing fiefs, did not deny that he held his possessions in trust from his over-lord, the Emperor. The principle that the Emperor was the sole sovereign of the land and people of this country was never disputed, even by those who actually behaved, to all appearance, in flat contradiction to it. We are inclined to go still further in excusing the feudal system in this country. It was a natural and whole-

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophy of History*, Part IV, Sec. II, Ch. 1.



some return to national consciousness from the artificial and intoxicated admiration of the continental régime adopted during the Nara and Heian periods. Shôgunacy and feudalism lacked the idealism of the earlier ages; but they were the genuine product of the soil. They were an answer to the call of the times. A return to reality, they betrayed the idealism of Shôtoku, the formulator of Japanese Monarchism. They were the respite from the strain imposed upon the nation by strange laws and alien customs. They form a low-tide mark of the cultural development of the nation, as well as of consciousness of our national constitution (*Kokutai*). We shall not find in it, therefore, elements that should serve as lessons for the coming reform. For such we have to look to the other two reforms. But, before we consider these, one word of warning may not be altogether out of place.

The Shôgun and feudalism intruded into our history as an abnormity and "an infinite falsehood," and yet, none the less, as the only means to satisfy the crying need of that age. To put it in another word, the age asked for an abnormity and a lie. It was not that our fathers asked for a loaf of bread and were given a stone, but that they yearned for a stone and got one. Is there any indication that the present generation is making a similar request? Let us remember that Shôgunacy was the result of the family feud between the Minamotos and the Tairas—the feud for which the chief of the latter, Kiyomori, was largely responsible. Is there nothing in the present to cause anxiety as to the possible feud between rival political parties? European history is rich in examples of partisan struggles, so dividing the country as to cause its utter downfall.

In studying past reforms for future enlightenment

we must delete the so-called Second Reform from our attention and devote ourselves to the Taika changes and to those of *Ishin*.

In comparing the two great reforms of Japanese history—those of the Taika and of the Meiji eras—we are struck with a few remarkable traits common to both. So fundamentally alike are they in some respects, that we may take them as manifestations of the race-mind, which had remained the same during the interval of 1300 years.

What, then, are the common characteristics? First of all, the emphasis put afresh on the legitimacy and the prerogative of the Royal House. In the earliest days of our history, as we have seen, we encounter the paramount importance of the *Uji* (family) system in the government of the land. It seems that a large number of families were possessed of independent power over extensive tracts of land and large retinues of people in different localities. Some of them were powerful enough to defy the authority of the Crown. One of these families was the Soga. When they embraced the cause of Buddhism and insisted upon the Court giving public recognition to it, we can read between the lines that this family stood at the head of the numerous adherents of the new faith. We can well believe that the adoption of Buddhism meant not only the acceptance of an exotic religion, but also the approval of foreign culture in general. A religion rarely thrives on a foreign soil unsupported by its accustomed props—its arts and rites, usages and literature. To reject an alien faith is to exclude foreign culture. To welcome the one is to greet the other. When the Mononobés and their party opposed the public recognition of Sakya Muni's teachings, they objected simultaneously to the importation of ideas from

abroad—or at least of Hindu culture. The conflict that ensued between the Mononobés and the Sogas was embittered by the feud that had been fomenting between them. The former were badly beaten, and, as the latter showed further signs of inordinate ambition, they were in turn put an end to by a large *Uji*, subsequently called the Fujiwara, loyally devoted to the throne. Prince Shôtoku, who at the time was acting as Regent, having succeeded in confirming the legitimacy of the Royal House, established monarchism as the principle of Japanese nationality. As soon as he made secure the rights of the Crown, he pursued the policy of his former enemy, the Sogas, and espoused with open arms and more open heart the tenets of Buddha. By this proceeding he unbarred the gates of the country to continental, both Chinese and Indian, civilizations, which came flooding in like water seeking a lower level. It is this untrammelled introduction of exoticism that constitutes the second characteristic of the Taika Reform. For this enterprise, instituted eighty years after Shôtoku's demise, consisted in the wholesale importation of every element of the civilization of Sui and of T'ang. Though history makes but scant mention of the anti-foreign demonstration made at the time, there must have been "patriots" and Chauvinists who fought against the blind imitation of an alien pattern. But this imitation triumphed. Japan could not stem the continental current. What nation could, under the circumstances existing in the country in the seventh century? What other people ever resisted a higher culture invading their land? Monsieur Lebon, the French sociologist, taunts the Japanese with being merely imitative. This is the last rebuke we should expect from a Frenchman, whose religion came from

Palestine, his art from Greece, his mathematics from Arabia, his very language from Rome. Nor are the French the only European nation whose cultural elements are almost altogether of foreign extraction. All the nations that have risen to any level of civilization did so on borrowed wings. Perhaps the only race that refused to respond to exotic influence was the American Indian—but even the Red Man could not withstand the introduction of fire-water ! When foreign superiority is recognized in any phase of life, the wisest course for all peoples to take is gracefully to open channels for its steady inflow and adapt it to their own needs. Ideas distasteful to our notion of propriety, or dangerous to our political constitution, may filter in. Mistakes are likely to occur in steering over an uncharted sea. But, if only the heart of the people is sound, cannot errors be amended in due time and dangers averted ? Mistakes are sterile in a healthy soil. Many of the Taika reforms never bore any fruit : they did not even sprout, being dried up on paper. The Institutes of Taihō, promulgated at the commencement of the eighth century, did not fare any better. All these attempts at reform were premature, and were impossible of execution among an unprepared people. But they set, none the less, an ideal standard after which to strive, and to be studied for future use. They stimulated thought. They furnished new terms. They pointed the way to walk in after centuries.

The class among which the Taika and Taihō laws were most applied was the nobility ; but, as these had a large clientele, whatever legislation affected the *grandees* told instantly on the masses. When, therefore, the enclosures of the great estates were confiscated and distributed among the landless, in accordance with the *Handen* system, the consequence

was the uplifting of the plebeians in their economic and legal status. The emancipation, partial as it was, of slaves and serfs, broadened the social basis of the Empire. This step towards democracy was the third characteristic of the Taika Reform.

The history of the Meiji era is so new that the main facts constituting it are still vivid in the memory of the present generation. *Ishin* began with two slogans—"Son-ô" and "*Jô-i*"—"Restore the King, expel the foreigner!" First about *Son-ô*. It was the repetition of what happened under Shôtoku. Feudal Japan was governed by 300 *daimyo*, the *Uji*. Some of them behaved very much like the Sogas—in some ways worse—by depriving the Emperor of his prerogatives and leaving for him only empty honour. The primary aim of the Meiji Reform was to bring the legitimate ruler to his own inheritance and to establish his throne. When this mission was completed, it had as a consequence the elevation of the peasant—the mere hewer of wood and drawer of water—from the status of a servant or a sub-tenant (the *daimyo* who held fief of the Shôgun, the chief tenant) to that of a direct subject of the Emperor. Such a thing had never been heard of in the most elaborate laws copied from China. The *samurai*, inclusive of the *daimyo*, were deprived of their swords and estates. They were themselves the authors of these reforms, and they accomplished them by first sacrificing their own interests, as did the imperial princes in the days of the Taihō Reforms. Guided by a keen moral instinct, they led in the work of reconstruction. They knew they were doing right, though they could not explain the wherefore of their own doings. They looked for reasons, and these they found in Western sciences. They inaugurated a great work of Democracy, without even knowing

that there was such a word. The term "Equality" was a familiar one in Buddhism; but none thought of it as a political expression, or else the gentle tenets of Sakya Muni would have been anathematized as a "dangerous doctrine," radically incongruous with Japan's *Kokutai*. But, early in the Meiji era, Rousseau found his way into the country, and received fairer treatment than he did in France or Switzerland in his own day. The preamble of the American Constitution was studied with deep admiration. Thus were circulated in New Japan all shades of outlandish opinions, without molestation and with approbation. The cry "*Jō-i*" was hushed, and no wonder, since it was originally invented to harass the Shōgun's Government for signing a treaty with a foreign Power without the consent of the Crown. It was not really aimed at the foreigner himself. The instant the Shōgunate was abolished, it was replaced by "*Kai-koku*" (Open the country). Never was table turned with such alacrity. Xenophilism now took the country by storm, though with greater discretion than in the Taika and Taihō eras, as is clearly evident in the Charter Oath. Japan now committed herself to Occidentalization with as much ardour and sincerity as she once did to Sinofication.

If thus the distinguishing traits of the national psychology, as shown in the Great Reforms of our history, are (1) the stabilization of the royal authority, (2) the broadening of popular rights, (3) the introduction of foreign ideas, will the next Great Reform that people speak about—can the coming great movement—take a course utterly unlike that of its predecessors, and (1) lower the imperial prestige, (2) detrude popular rights, and (3) eschew exoticism? In other words, are we approaching an age analogous to the Kamakura Shōgunal Period, when the

Emperor was reverently excluded from the exercise of his power, when the people were reduced to mere engines of drudgery, and when the nation received no impetus from abroad?

The present is not altogether devoid of signs of reversion to an old political type. Party jealousies are not less bitter than during the Gen-Pei feuds. Unscrupulous Kiyomori may have his counterpart. The Communist peril has frightened the timid away from foreign influences in general. The nation is at the cross-roads of its destiny. Which way will it choose?

This Empire of ours will be wiped off the political map of the world should violent hands touch our ruling House. The history of this nation will lose all significance for mankind should its sons fail to continue in the march of Democracy. We shall sink into nonentity, should we, through self-complacency, cease to "polish our native gems with stones quarried in other lands." Japan is started on a fair way to prove to the world that Royalism is not inconsistent with Democracy, that it is not incompetent to deal with proletarian problems, and that a king can be an instrument of Heaven for the achievement of social justice.

## CHAPTER V

### EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND PROBLEMS

“ To elevate above the spirit of the age must be regarded as the end of education.”—JEAN PAUL.

#### I. THE SYSTEM OF GENERAL EDUCATION

JAPAN is made up of schools. Japan is a school, an Athens. Temperamentally alert and quick like the ancient Hellenese, of passive turn of mind, ready to receive, and immensely curious to learn everything new and strange, the people turn to learning as do ducks to water.

The oft-cited article in the Charter Oath—“ Seek knowledge throughout the world ”—did not fall on unwilling ears. We have already seen that, as far back as the ninth century, there were edicts on education—only partly carried out, to be sure—but their object was the training of cadets for public service and Court functions, as admission to schools was limited to boys above a certain rank.<sup>1</sup> The subjects taught were also restricted to a few Chinese curricula which consisted chiefly of accomplishments. Education in those days was valued for its artistic rather than its intellectual merit. Even penmanship was learned more for its beauty than for its practical use. The Chinese worship of forms heightened the respect for calligraphy and etiquette. The utilitarian aspects of education were not emphasized, or, if they were in

<sup>1</sup> For an account of the old educational system, see Lombard, *Pre-Meiji Education in Japan*.



exceptional cases, they were viewed from a State rather than a private view-point. Astronomy was important in order to determine the fortunes of the State, and its uses for chronological and meteorological purposes were subsidiary. Mathematics was essential as a branch of military tactics.

This sort of formal education did not spread extensively beyond the capital, and whatever little of it found its way into the provinces did not get encouragement at the hands of local magnates during the age of feudalism, until the country was more or less pacified by the Tokugawas.

Every daimiate had a central school for the instruction of the *samurai*. The lessons taught did not vary much from the old curriculum, but the motive changed. They became non-practical and moral. Calligraphy was now mastered more for its character-forming effect than for its æsthetic value. Etiquette was learned more as an expression of respect paid to honour than for grace of manners. *Bushido* was the comprehensive ideal of pedagogy.

With the rise of New Japan the conception of education saw a great change. Its centre deviated from character-building, or the training of a gentleman, to the acquisition of intellectual knowledge for an utilitarian purpose. The school was made a mart of information. Pupils were graded according to cleverness and capacity for memorizing. We may roughly state that in the Nara and Kyôto days man was valued for the manner in which he did things; in the feudal times for what he did or could do, and after the Meiji Period for what he knew.

When Emperor Meiji told his subjects to "Seek knowledge throughout the world," he could not have meant that knowledge must be sought for its own sake or at the sacrifice of the higher attributes of

manhood. The Charter Oath names the object for which knowledge was to be sought. It says expressly : " In order to establish on a firm foundation the principle of the nation's sovereignty." The knowledge here referred to must not be confused or identified with education in a broad sense of the term. It meant national education in a narrower sense. It was to be nation-wide in execution, but restricted in ideal.

Such a scheme sounded a tocsin more revolutionary than the Restoration itself. It tolled the knell for the privileges of the higher classes and the uplifting of the masses ; it rang in the emancipation and intellectual elevation of the common people, and signalled the ultimate triumph of democracy. We have already seen in a previous chapter how the leaven of knowledge worked in early Meiji days.

Two leaders of the Restoration—Okubo and Kido—are said to have been the initiators of this movement, and their ideas are traced back to the impressions they received during their visit to the United States in 1871.

According to the Code of Education framed after a French pattern and promulgated in 1872, every child, male and female, irrespective of its social status, was obliged to attend school for four years, from the age of six to ten. The period was later lengthened to six years, and there is every prospect of adding two more at no distant future.

How faithfully the law was carried into effect is seen in the following figures (1923) :—

Number of children of school age	.	.	10,688,275
Attendants in primary schools	.	.	8,009,090
Attendants in higher grades	.	.	1,120,701

That is, out of every 100 children between six and

twelve years of age, 9923 are actually attending schools. There is a slight difference in the ratio between boys (99·32) and girls (99·15).

There are in Japan at present about 44,440 schools of all grades, of which 25,500 are elementary. Of the 260,000 persons in the teaching profession, nearly 200,000 are in the primary schools. It is the duty of every self-governing local body to build and keep up a school of its own. As it is a matter of pride for a community to possess a fine building, there is laudable emulation for good school equipment. This is most evident from the mere fact that in most towns and villages the school is the finest building—out of all proportion to the dwellings of the villages. The racial love of children comes conspicuously into prominence in the attention that local bodies bestow upon schools. Only, their economic resources do not keep pace with the natural increase of population. The State gives no small amount in grants-in-aid. The State owes this duty to the communities, as it requires a certain standard in the quality of instruction and qualification of the teaching staff, in the sanitary arrangements of buildings and playgrounds, and the choice of text-books. Though the teachers are far from being well paid, their salaries averaging £40 a year, their position is more secure than in any other public service. For instance, the pension rate for them is much more generous than for ordinary civilian officials.

There is a scheme afoot for the central Government to bear a part of the local expenses of education, as they are a heavy drain on the earnings of rural communities. In larger cities education requires nearly one-eighth of the whole expenditure, but in villages and small towns one-half of the revenue is taken up by schools. And as country children, when grown

up, move into cities, the present system is like robbing rustic Peter to pay urban Paul.

## 2. RESULTS OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION

Whatever may be the shortcomings to be pointed out in the over-organization of our school-system and the autocratic pressure put upon it by the bureaucracy, there is little doubt that it has astonishing results to its credit. The wide divergences in provincial dialects which were sometimes encouraged by *daimyo* in their respective territories, in order to fortify local patriotism, are now totally dispelled. There was a time—and that not long ago either—when a man from the north-west could hardly hold conversation with his compatriots from the south-east. They both used the same vocabulary and the same syntax, but their accent and intonation were at great variance.

The best showing of which compulsory education can boast is seen in the wide diffusion of periodicals and the vast circulation of newspapers, two of which print 1,500,000 copies daily. A still more apparent evidence of the universal literacy of the Japanese is shown in the fact that nearly all the daily newspapers devote the first page entirely to book and magazine advertisements.

By far the most important effect of compulsory education is the mental and social uplift of the masses. As a recent English writer has repeatedly stressed, there is no cleavage in Japanese schools along class lines, no snobbishness on account of wealth or birth. The school is the most powerful agency for democracy, and it performs this function by a general development of intellect and by treating all pupils on a common footing. One seldom hears of complaints made by rich parents that their "precious

ones " are treated on the same level with the poor, or by poor parents that their " dear ones " are despised at school. Most of the titled nobility send their children to the so-called Peers' School, established specially for their benefit ; but this institution admits the sons and daughters of the bourgeoisie also.

Another notable advantage which the uniform national educational system has conferred on the nation is the blow it dealt to local spirit. The importance of this advantage cannot be exaggerated, particularly in the years immediately following the Restoration, when the nation was not yet wholly unified, and when loyalty still meant fidelity to the *daimyo* rather than to the Emperor. As intimated, when the educational system was first framed, there was comparatively little attention paid to the character-forming function of pedagogy. Every other consideration was sacrificed for knowledge. Very soon it became apparent that the youths, as their barques slipped from their moorings, were fast heading into breakers. They were in moral jeopardy. There were not lacking indications of youthful minds entertaining Radical ideas, subversive of time-honoured institutions. The work of " establishing the principle of the nation's sovereignty on a firm basis " was in danger of being undermined. It was then (1890) that the famous Rescript on Education was issued by the Emperor in person. This noble document has had many interpreters and commentators, who have furnished the nation with the standard of what is generally called " National Morality." The term is somewhat misleading. As it is a word most frequently used among us, and as " National " signifies our country, it means Japanese Ethics, or a code of morals proper, essential and natural to persons of Japanese nationality. It is

taken for granted that it is based on universal truth—unchangeable for all eternity and applicable in all places—yet none the less peculiarly Japanese. National Ethics, then, is a title given to the exposition of duties to be observed by His Majesty's loyal subjects, much as "Christian Ethics"—a term first coined by Danæus—meant the exegesis of the Decalogue. The concept of human obligations was restricted to a narrow sphere, fixed by a certain norm. And yet the advocates of restriction will none the less claim universality for their system. Christian ethics are said to be applicable not only to Christians, but to the whole of humanity—and if any one would deny this, he is simply placed outside the pale. Similarly, the "National Ethics" of the Japanese pedagogues vaunts an universal character—on condition, one may dare to add, that man is conceived as a member of a State, and, further, that a State has absolute power over his body and soul.

The value of human conduct being gauged by its utility and subserviency to the well-being of the State, man is viewed as the instrument of an organized body, and hence patriotism and loyalty head the list of virtues. They stand higher than such commonplace virtues as honesty or kindness. If honesty is to be recommended, it is because it is in the end useful for the welfare of the State. A kindly disposition is an important element of an all-round character, and a typical Japanese should own such, not to be outdone by other nationals. So much for the moral training of boys.

As to girls, though they, too, are taught to be loyal and patriotic, they are particularly enjoined to be "a good wife and a wise mother." The ideal that should allure them in well-doing is domesticity. They are seldom told of the larger or deeper virtues required

of a human being. They are not expected to live a life of their own for the sake of life, but to be always subjected to the will of their husbands or children. No unmarried or childless woman exists in the scheme of "National Ethics," or, if one exists, she is to be treated by respectable society as an odd bird—much as a pagan saint would be ostracized in a "Christian" community.

In the scheme of "National Ethics" there should be nothing greater or higher than the State. Internationalism is confused with cosmopolitanism, and is supposed to be closely allied with treason. "Our country—right or wrong!" The State is the absolute entity, subject to no law, according to the ultra-patriotic doctrine. Its supporters would stop at no means short of calumny, terrorism, murder, for the promotion of the good of the State! They practically deny the existence of what is put down in the Charter Oath as "the universal law of heaven and earth"—a supreme law that transcends all municipal laws.

No religion of any sort is taught in public schools. A religious organization may have a school of its own, in which it may incorporate its doctrines in the regular curriculum. In such a case, the privileges accorded to public schools are denied it. The utter absence of religious instruction at home or in schools created a demand for Sunday schools under the auspices of Buddhist or Christian sects, but these could by no means meet the real spiritual need of the rising generation. Only lately have the authorities come to realize that religion in some form or other must be included in the plan of general instruction. Purely secular education has been found wanting. This is a confirmation of what we have said before, that character-building has been a factor

neglected in our modern pedagogical system. Nor is this the only defect.

In spite of admirable thoroughness in the execution of educational laws, particularly with reference to school attendance, the three R's imparted cannot be said to penetrate the juvenile mind as effectually or lastingly as one would suppose. In 1927, out of 514,364 young men who underwent examination for conscription, 54,000 were shown to be unable to read or write; out of 572,012 who went through the examination in 1928, 53,780 were found to be practically illiterate. As regards 465,809 who (outside Tokyo and Osaka Prefectures, returns of which have yet to be given) went through the examinations in 1929, 39,973 turned out to be practically illiterate.

Astonished at the enormous number of the alphabets, the Education Office redoubled its efforts to establish continuation schools and other methods, so that by 1929 the number of illiterates among the youths coming up for military recruiting examination was reduced to less than 50,000.

The innumerable agencies for spreading education justify the words I used at the beginning of this chapter, that Japan is a school. The gross amount visibly and publicly spent on education in the whole country (not including the outlay by private individuals for the education of their children) amounts to nearly £55,000,000 (1923). Of this sum, over £22,500,000 are used for primary education.

### 3. EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS OF THE SECONDARY GRADE

A remarkably large number of children when they leave elementary schools, advance to institutions of higher grades corresponding to the Grammar schools, high schools, lycée or the lower classes of the gymnasias.



Of some 1,800,000 girls and boys who leave the primary schools every year, about 10 per cent. of girls and about 8 per cent. of boys go to higher schools. The interest in girls' education has grown conspicuously since 1914, perhaps due to the general improvement in the economic condition of the country.

Of these secondary schools, there are three kinds—the normal, the technical and the humanistic. The first prepares boys and girls to qualify themselves to be teachers in elementary schools; the second naturally divides itself into different classifications—agricultural, commercial and mechanical. The third, which is the most popular, and known as the Middle School, takes boys between the ages of thirteen and twenty years. Here, besides the usual courses of ordinary study—history, geography, rudiments of natural and physical sciences, mathematics, ethics, Japanese—English demands a good deal of time. The reason for devoting so much time to English has not been very convincing; but, since the beginning of Meiji, English has been so popular that, by general and tacit consent of the nation, it has been occupying a prominent position in secondary education. One reason for the popularity of English is due to the fact that the Middle School has turned out, though this was not its avowed object, to be a preparatory institution for higher studies, and for the higher studies a foreign language—English, French or German—is an absolutely necessary requirement. The place of English in our educational scheme is important enough to repay further consideration.

The course of study in the secondary school is five years for boys and four years for girls, though for the latter it may be lengthened by one year. At present there are more schools of this grade

for girls than for boys, the respective numbers being about 700 and 500. The pupils in the latter institutions total a little less than 300,000, and in the former exceed that number. This does not prove that the education of girls receives more attention than that of boys. There are many other opportunities open to boys—as, for instance, vocational schools of the secondary grade, of which there are :—

Technical schools . . . . .	104
Agricultural schools . . . . .	330
Commercial schools . . . . .	229
Merchant Marine schools . . . . .	12
Aquatic Products schools . . . . .	10
Industrial Craft schools . . . . .	113
<hr/>	
Total . . . . .	798

These embrace a body of 215,250 pupils. Furthermore, there are 15,383 vocational supplementary schools—with 1,018,150 pupils.

In addition to these vocational schools of secondary grade, there are vocational schools of higher standing which require of their graduates three years of advanced training after finishing the regular course. Of such higher institutions there are :—

Higher Technical schools . . . . .	22
Higher Commercial schools . . . . .	17
Higher Agricultural schools . . . . .	14
Higher Merchant Marine schools . . . . .	2
<hr/>	
Total . . . . .	55

The number of students attending these higher vocational institutions is about 23,000.

It is gravely to be doubted whether secondary instruction fulfils the great function of preparing lads or girls for active life as well as for higher schools. It is generally admitted that boys who leave middle

schools are not fitted for any special service. They lack the knowledge and the discipline which boys of similar education possess in Western countries.

To a foreign observer, the number of years devoted to secondary education must seem strangely out of proportion to the results obtained. To the Japanese, the explanation is easy. The use of Chinese ideograms is the root of all evil in this respect. A large part of the school-life is spent in mastering some 4000 ideograms, most of which are pronounced in three or four ways and written in at least three ways. The waste of energy thereby incurred is worthy of the most serious consideration, and can be prevented only by the adoption of transliteration—*i.e.*, the use of the Roman alphabet instead of Chinese ideograms. That our educational system, elaborate as it is, is frustrated by the use of ideograms, is evidenced by the comparatively large number of young men who come up for military conscription examination at the age of twenty-one—that is, seven years after leaving primary schools—and who, as noted above, have forgotten most of the characters they had once learned and have fallen back into illiteracy.

A curious fact has come to light—that the blind man can be better educated than his more fortunate brethren who are endowed with good sight; for the former, by acquiring the forty-seven letters of the *I-ro-ha* syllabary, through the Braille system, can read history, geography or anything written in that system; whereas he who has eyesight cannot read the daily papers unless he has mastered at least 2000 characters.

It is really to be questioned whether the many hours devoted in elementary and secondary education to the mastery of words and letters are not partly responsible for the passive literary and humanistic taste of the

pupils, and for the enfeeblement of their reasoning power and practical ability. Facts give warnings on this point. A sad thing about it is that the mechanical genius of the race is not given fuller opportunity for development, and an unseemly rush for secondary preparatory schools has been the result, creating what is known as "examination hells." Applicants to these schools could not all be accommodated. Only a part of them—and in some popular schools only a small part, say one-tenth—could be admitted. It is to relieve this stress and strain on the one hand, and to foster technical education on the other, that the Government has been indirectly and mildly putting pressure on boys and girls to enter trade schools. This is justified, as 90 per cent. of the entrants to secondary schools come from homes whose occupants are engaged in farming, commerce and industry. The wisdom and the necessity of this policy are also evident in face of the fact that some 30 to 50 per cent. of university graduates are unemployed. Every possible means must be taken to make the people more self-dependent and productive.

A public-spirited newspaper offered prizes for the best essays on the improvement of education. Some 132 people responded. The writers expressed remarkably harmonious opinion on such important points as the following: (1) the necessity of abolishing the present uniform system, and the need of permitting each school to work out its own method, the Government laying down only fundamental principles; (2) to discontinue special privileges accorded to schools of certain grades; (3) improvement of supplementary schools; (4) number of school years to be shortened; (5) higher institutions of learning to be made more open; (6) the study of law and politics to be discouraged and more practical studies to be fostered;

(7) the present method of "thought guidance" to be immediately given up.

An exceedingly suggestive fact is that these opinions are at such variance with those expressed by an officially appointed Committee on Educational Investigation. How beautifully nature works out equilibrium by the centripetal and centrifugal forces !

#### 4. EDUCATION OF WOMEN AND THE NEW WOMANHOOD

To return to secondary education, let us take a glance at the so-called "High Schools for Girls," which correspond in pedagogical value to the middle schools for boys.

The character of girls' schools varies more than that of boys', according to local conditions ; but in the main features they are much the same. Their popularity is shown by the large number of pupils—about 80,000—who enter immediately after leaving primary schools at the age of fourteen, in order to study for four or five years. Among the bourgeois class a school diploma has become an almost indispensable requisite for an advantageous marriage. As there is a custom in China according to which a bride takes with her, as a part of her dowry, and a sign of good breeding, a *kakemono* by some illustrious artist or savant (or its facsimile), so has it become a custom for Japanese girls to possess the diploma of a school of high standing (of which there is no facsimile !), as a supplementary—or, in some cases, a principal—part of a dowry.

As the matrimonial age is advancing—the majority of our young women now marry at twenty-two or twenty-three—how to fill the intervening years between eighteen and twenty-two is an important

question. The natural solution would be to keep our young women at home, employed in domestic work, without isolating them altogether from intellectual or artistic associations. Ordinarily, this is possible for those who live in cities and towns, where there are facilities for continuing lessons in music, drawing, dress-making, tea ceremony, flower arrangement, domestic science, etc. But as to girls who are in the country, devoid of these facilities, woe betide them! Three courses are open to them: (1) they are hastily married off; (2) they are consigned to household drudgery; (3) they live in petulant discontent. Only in rare instances have girls returning to their country homes after years of study in a town or city shown enough initiative to start some social work in their communities. While our educational institutions, including the university, are not calculated to encourage independent thinking, we cannot expect our young women to be pioneers in any enterprise.

It is a matter beyond controversy that the intellectual advancement of woman will show marked progress in the near future, or else what is the good of general education? One may even say that her intelligence has made progress in spite of, rather than because of, the educational system that did not aim at the raising of her status.

The emancipation of the female sex has been an unlooked-for by-product of our educational system. It came as a surprise—and to many not a pleasant one, either.

At this point, it seems proper and fitting to pay a tribute to the part played by Christian missions in the cause of female education. Scant justice is accorded to the missionaries, on whom cheap abuse is usually heaped—without fear of retaliation.

Foreign residents in the East who have left their moral standards at home regard the missionaries of their communities with no hearty sympathy. They delight in the least scandal that may be whispered about the preachers of the Gospel, as any misstep taken by a weak brother is a justification of their own iniquitous life. While missionaries find little support among their lay countrymen on the field of their labours, the Government of the country where they work is usually indifferent, if not unfriendly. Rarely is public honour shown to those who deserve it.

In Japan, the debt which the country—not the State as such, but society and the people—owes to Christian missions in the matter of education and philanthropy is by no means small. Especially is this true in the domain of girls' education and kindergartens. Government reports do not mention this service, because it does not fall within the ægis of governmental activity. At one time the Government disapproved of mission schools, because they were suspected of teaching children to be unfaithful to the State and disloyal to the sovereign. A story goes that General Nogi, when he was engaged in the siege of Port Arthur, made an accurate study of the soldiers, with particular reference to their religious profession, and he found that Christian soldiers were not wanting one jot or tittle in patriotism. It was not long before the public and the public authorities recognized that Christian schools were no menace to the morale of the nation; but they are still reluctant to acknowledge in full measure the contribution which missions—particularly American and to a less extent British—have made to the furtherance of education. What is to be noted with special admiration is the quiet way in which missionaries have

worked in fields little noticed by the authorities—first, in the neglected fields of education for bourgeois girls, and, later, in kindergartens and settlements.

The first school opened for girls in New Japan was a missionary enterprise. It was the Ferris Seminary in Yokohama, established in 1870, and followed in a few months by a similar institution in Tokyo. Within twenty years no less than forty-three schools for girls were established by different missions. The first Government school for girls was brought into existence two years later—namely, in 1872. It admitted only girls between seven and fourteen years of age.

The example given by the missions and the Government was felt by our women, who started schools on their own initiative and responsibility. In the meantime, the demand for education among ambitious young girls grew so rapidly that secondary schools were established in every town of any size, so that their number now amounts to 857.

The authorities are still conservative in their attitude towards higher education for women. The universities are not willing to admit women—partly for reasons of economy, since they are already overcrowded with men students. Some few faculties take in women as “hospitants.” As yet, only one State university has had women graduates from the regular course, and these are still very few.

The most advanced Government institutions for the gentle sex are the two higher normal colleges for women, one in Tokyo and the other in Nara. These can scarcely satisfy one-tenth of the clamorous desire for higher education among the rising generation of women. Here, again, private individuals and missions come to the rescue. Early in this century there were started three private colleges of



good standing where women could receive a mental training nearly equivalent to that received in Government universities. One of these is the so-called Tsuda College for the study of English, the second is the so-called Japan Woman's University started by Naruse, and the third is a Medical College. Again the mission boards have come forth in the interest of the higher education of girls. The Kobe College, the Dôshisha College for Women, and the Woman's Christian College of Tokyo are eminent examples, for which the Government has none to correspond.

#### 5. UNIVERSITIES AND HIGHER PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS

The growing ambition of the Japanese youth is for studentship in a university. It is incredible what sacrifices this means on the part of parents. How many ancestral estates have been parted with for three years of a son's academic life! Why?

University education is the only avenue to an honourable and lucrative career. Few pursue higher education for education's sake, much less for mental or moral discipline. It is not to be denied that some enter a university for the love of knowledge—for a hobby, as it were; but by far the largest majority regard it as the quickest road to promotion. This is not said in depreciation of higher learning or specialized study.

With the rise of New Japan, public places were opened for men trained in new ideas. All large business was conducted on Western methods, and it required men who were educated in these. A quarter of a century ago, university graduates obtained good and responsible posts immediately after leaving college—hence, thither resorted all ambitious

youth. But as the supply of college graduates grew faster than did vocations or avocations for them to pursue, an examination was adopted in the Civil Service and in the larger commercial houses.

The universities accommodated their curricula more and more to the demands of Civil Service examiners and of employers. Grave doubts have been expressed whether the highest institution of education should be made an organ for subserving the purposes of the Government and of capitalists. The more advanced thinkers would see to it that the university should follow a more ideal aim, and seek truth for truth's sake, or build character for character's sake.

The University Act, revised early in 1928, says: "The object of the university is to teach the principles and applications of sciences essential to the State and to carry on their research, without neglecting the cultivation of national consciousness and the elevation of personal character."

The professional preparation given in the university is by no means inconsistent with the avowed aim. All professions are essential to the State. In a country like Japan, where nearly all the factors of public life are of foreign origin, learning is more useful than experience—and he who knows most gets the best pay. But a delicate question is raised when the object of research comes under discussion, as, for instance, when the authorities disband societies formed by students for the study of Marxian Communism. Isn't its theory, false or true, a fit theme for research? Well might the authorities answer, "Yes, but how can a doctrine which abnegates the existence of a State ever be essential to the State?" A student is still in the domain of research as long as he is studying and

thinking and doubting, but the instant he is convinced and begins to act, he quits research—and becomes a danger to the State and a nuisance to the police. The closer the espionage, the severer the surveillance of authorities in the gatherings and studies of students, the greater grows the daring on their part, and the more obnoxious their thought and the more perilous their actions. “The blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church.”

With the majority of students the question of the ultimate aim of the university is a matter of no great concern. To them the university is only a stepping-stone to a career. Its certificate is more important than the knowledge it imparts. An ass with a degree gets better hay than a steed without one. No wonder every youth rushes into it and every parent slaves to send his son to it. The institution itself becomes a financial venture if it can attract a large number, especially if it confines its teaching to such subjects as require no apparatus. Accordingly, there have recently been started many so-called universities in which only one or two chairs of humanistic studies—law, literature, religion—form the faculty. Of some thirty-two private universities, only two—Waseda and Keiô—are more or less complete, the rest being merely special colleges.

A complete university should have the seven faculties of law, medicine, engineering, literature, science, agriculture, economics. Even among the Government, or, as they are called, Imperial Universities, very few are as yet complete. This matter is restricted by the limitation imposed by the public budget, on the one hand, and by the number of students intellectually prepared for university work, on the other. Private institutions, as a rule, glean those who do not get into the Imperial Universities,

which have been established in Tokyo, Kyoto, Fukuoka, Sendai, Sapporo, Seoul and Taihoku. The Government supports other special institutions of university grade—such as Medical Colleges, Institutes of Technology, Normal Colleges, Academies of Arts and of Music.

All these higher institutions of learning have their *raison d'être* in the instruction of the youth of the country in some sort of useful profession. But when they turn out more graduates than the State or society can profitably absorb, the value of higher education diminishes, and the complaint follows that it is even harmful, since it makes young men unfit for useful occupations—even dangerously discontent with the existing order of society.

In number of students, the universities vary greatly. The oldest and the most complete—namely, the Imperial University of Tokyo—has 8500 students, followed by the one in Kyôto with 5000. In the above seven Government universities there are studying nearly 20,000 young men, and in special colleges of the same grade, 4000. If to this list we add some 38,000 students matriculated in two dozen private institutions of university grade (though several of these are rather weak), we have a whole army of over 62,000 university men, of whom one-third annually leave their lecture-rooms for a professional career. It is worth noting that all our higher educational institutions are located in large cities.

The country is provided with eighteen technological, eleven agricultural and eleven commercial colleges, maintained by the fiscus, where are given advanced courses in their respective special branches for the graduates of secondary schools. They are roughly three years lower in grade than the university.

These institutions have at present about 15,000 students, and are very popular. They have altogether a capacity for the accommodation of 5500 new entrants yearly, but the number of applicants for admission is usually four or five times as great. A large number of similar institutions have therefore been started by private foundations.

The studies are very often ill-chosen or ill-framed, and the students, as well as the professors, have fallen between two stools—between practice and idealism. Not a few of the lectures sound like literal translation from a language totally distinct from ours; the primary principles taught are so abstract and above the ability of average youth to translate into deeds. So feeble is the moral influence exerted in academic halls, that those who leave them with diplomas are frequently unable to adjust their ideas and private conduct to a level higher than their immediate surroundings. This is the more deplorable, since those to whom nature has denied the gift of intellect have flocked to the lecture-rooms in large numbers. The consequence has been that an educational establishment has often proved a paying concern, and colleges and universities have been launched without due conviction as to their higher mission.

Degrading as it is to a university to be made a commercial venture, as long as it is a paying concern it shows its usefulness. And if the students or their parents find their investment an unprofitable piece of business, the public gain in the general elevation of social service. Due to the glut of university graduates in the market of the higher professions, they have accepted lower posts, and we find some of them as salesmen, police officers, clerks, newspaper reporters—and in all cases they supplant their less

educated predecessors, thus raising the general level of intelligence and of service.

Respecting the highest and the most difficult aim of the university—namely, the elevation of personal character—no provision of any kind is made in our institutions. No tradition; no usage. Unfortunately no great name connected with the university inspires youth. No ivied tower or storied bust imparts tender memories to the campus. The atmosphere is as dry as science, never warm with passion. There are minds working, but no soul stirring.

#### 6. EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES OUTSIDE SCHOOLS

Complete as is the system of education, as conducted in schools and colleges, it is by no means sufficient to satisfy the demands of the public, of the adults, who have left schools. For them, ways must be opened for continuing study or for obtaining information on the changes that are constantly taking place, both in their particular lines of activity or in the general progress of the world. This demand is largely supplied by the periodical publications, and of these there are (1927) 1093 dailies, 550 weeklies, 6706 tri-monthlies (in the sense of three times a month)—altogether 8350. A large number of the dailies consist of local newspapers with strong partisan bias. All the so-called Big Five Newspapers are strictly neutral in politics. There are five dailies printed in the English language, two of which are under the management of foreign firms.

Of the numerous magazines, the most popular are those devoted to the interests of women, to whom the best are of service as their friend, guide and philosopher, and the worst as a corrupter of morals and manners.

The reading public of Japan is well supplied with

material in the form of original works, translations and reprints. In recent years the number of original works published has been about 20,000 annually, and of translations 7000 to 9000, besides some 60,000 periodicals of all sorts. It is a question whether there is any other country where the appetite for reading is as keen or as general. There are streets in Tokyo and Osaka lined with book-shops on both sides for a long distance.

A new venture in the field of publishing activity, albeit fast going out of fashion, was the issue of a series of books in a cheap edition—known as “one-yen books”—respectable cloth-bound books of 400 or 500 pages. There appeared a collection of some twenty volumes of contemporary Japanese literature. It was followed by a similar series on “*World Literature*,” consisting of translations of Western classics, both ancient and modern. “*World's Great Thought*” series succeeded, and, soon after, “*World's Dramatic Works*.” These enterprises, started by rival publishing houses, brought home to the humblest Japanese families some notions of the inner thought of the West. They made Homer, Virgil, Shakespeare, Dante, Cervantes, Goethe, Schiller, Ibsen, Bjørnsen, Carlyle, Emerson, household names. When one is told that one of the series mentioned above had a list of 300,000 subscribers and another 400,000, and that the translator of *Les Misérables* received for royalty £10,000, one gets some idea of the reading capacity of the Japanese public.

Closely connected with books are libraries, which Carlyle called the universities of the future. There are some 4000 libraries scattered throughout the country. Some of them are private foundations and many others are local libraries supported by prefectures, towns, and educational societies.

Popular and scientific lectures are becoming more and more common, and a large newspaper company—the Osaka Mainichi—has a regular department for spreading and improving cinematography for educational purposes.

The most important organizations for the popular and social education of the people are the so-called Young Men's Associations and similar bodies for young women. They are to be met with in every town and village, and number at present (1930) over 172,220 for boys, with a membership of over 2,740,000, and more than 15,181 for girls, with a membership of 1,735,000. They hold meetings, organize night schools and summer courses, and carry on social activities of all kinds except politics. Besides these, there are important associations such as the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A. The Buddhists, too, have their followers organized after the manner of the Christians. Not to be despised is the Boy Scout movement, with its 80,000 members in 280 groups, based on the English model. Though the organization was started only in 1921, the spirit animating it is by no means novel. Something like it had existed in many provinces in feudal days, and it is well known that General Baden-Powell had studied Japanese organizations before he commenced his own great work. The grown-ups have Adult Education organizations quite well administered. Then nearly every school convene the parents of children at stated periods of the year, not only to discuss pedagogy, but also to hear lectures for their own edification. A movement somewhat like the People's Colleges of Denmark finds enthusiastic supporters in the country.



## 7. RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

The State is a poor teacher. Its ideal of education rarely goes beyond law-abiding citizenship. It tries to squeeze the man into the narrow compass of a subject. A full development of personality is not to be expected from a State-directed school curriculum. That Government instruction overshoots its mark is shown in the repeated Communist complots, in which more participants were found in Government than in private institutions of learning. The fundamental defects of "National Ethics" have been sadly exposed.

When we speak of the inefficiency of State education, we have chiefly in mind the instruction in humanistic studies; for it must be admitted that in other branches, as of technical and physical sciences, the State must needs render assistance, and such assistance is indispensable in a country where there are as yet so few private foundations with a large fund at command. In the field of humanities—and here I am using the term in the sense of a broad moral and intellectual cultivation of thought in which purely human elements predominate, and not in the sense of *literæ humaniores* as opposed to *literæ divinæ*—in the field of humanities as such, the State is worse than a poor teacher. It has shown itself at its worst when it has tried to regulate the course of religious teaching in some countries. It is rumoured that our Government is contemplating the introduction of religious instruction into schools. This idea that the religious yearnings of youth must be satisfied is certainly an advance from the hitherto unfavourable attitude of the authorities; but to tinker with the relations which exist between an individual soul and God, is beyond the power of any living person or the

authority of any collective body—Church or State. Our Constitution says as much.

Has not our own experience in moral instruction taught us that an authoritative attitude in teaching ethics is impotent and an utter waste of time? Ask a child which of his classroom studies is most interesting, and he may name one of many subjects—say, geography, arithmetic, or whatever it may be that appeals to him; but ask him which is the most uninteresting and boring, and almost every boy and girl will answer “Morals.” It is no use to retort, “Medicine is bitter to the mouth: so is good advice to naughty ears.” The efficacy of herbs does not depend upon their bitterness. If we cannot rob them of acerbity, we put them in capsules. It is against all pedagogical laws to enforce a lesson on unwilling minds, or else it will have a contrary effect to what one hopes to accomplish. A wit has remarked that religion taught in a text-book is a second-hand religion, and can never be genuine. A religion learnt by rote is a mockery to man’s spiritual nature. A living person alone can impart faith. It is immoral to enforce faith. There is “more truth in honest doubt” than in all the mummery of an empty ritual. There is a farcical education which endeavours to instil moral ideas by routine teaching. A greater farce will it be to arouse religious sentiment in a classroom by lecturing at the beck and call of the Government. Such a process will end in three results: the encouragement of hypocrisy or of bigotry; the installation of ritualism; the reinforcement of “dangerous thought.”

In a country like ours, where education is left altogether in the hands of school teachers, and where family and clerical influence is exceedingly weak, the respect paid to the teaching staff by the pupils, at

least in the lower grades, is unbounded—very often even beautiful. What the teacher says is absolute truth, to be unwaveringly believed. One word from his lips will easily find credence with children and bring them to his faith, which they will maintain with tenacity to the verge of bigotry. If the teacher's creed does not fall on fertile soil, it may still be formally championed and openly professed just to please him, thus fostering insincerity and hypocrisy.

Should religious instruction be made compulsory, it will not be long before the authorities may adopt some form of catechism, of rites and ritual, whereby to appeal to youthful senses. It is so easy to argue that a spiritual truth finds entrance into an infant mind through the senses. In a few years it will be found that an imposed religion has become a stiff ritual, just as moral lessons have now become empty repetition or formal verbosity. Both are conducive only to sleepiness. We may be thankful if the effect of such religious teaching goes no further than somnolence; for it is also possible to arouse, through the same channel, ideas that allow none to sleep with any peace of mind.

The so-called "dangerous thought" of the day is itself a sort of religion. It is faith. It is enthusiasm. It is fanaticism. To die for it is martyrdom in the mind of its adherents. There are in all religions some germs of dangerous thought. One may declare that there is perfect safety in an "ethnic," national system of faith—say, in Judaism for the Hebrews, Shinto for the Japanese. But we have seen that the system of National Ethics, with its emphasis on patriotism and loyalty to the Throne, has fallen far short of its mark. Such a system, built on a narrow basis—too narrow for the human soul—is, of course, destined to fail. Similarly, religious instruction

circumscribed in its scope to national interest can never fare better. A religion, to be worthy of that name, must take cognizance of the whole man, and the State does not comprehend the whole of man. Man is more than a State. He has within him that which transcends all the pretensions of principalities and Powers. You cannot cramp his infinite soul into its limited framework. Youths entertaining dangerous thoughts will only find further justification for their ideas in the universal character of religion. The Hegelian conception of the State as the highest ethical form of society, the realization of the moral ideal, does not by any means imply either a duty or a right on its part to control the thought of individual men. On the contrary, it implies that it should afford opportunities for each citizen to exercise and extend his freedom to its utmost capacity.

#### 8. THE PLACE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN JAPANESE EDUCATION

We have seen elsewhere how many attempts were made by European nations to trade with Japan in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and how they failed, except in the case of the Dutch merchants who had their headquarters in Batavia. The Dutch even succeeded in establishing a small factory in Nagasaki. Known as "Southern Barbarians"—"Southern" on account of their coming from Java—they conducted a good business, and served the important purpose of a window through which Japan could look upon Europe. She learned from them something of the progress made in the West in science, technology and tactics. As they aroused the curiosity, admiration and confidence of aspiring youths, the small Dutch compound became the resort of some ambitious young men.

There was a curious arrangement by which a few indispensable interpreters were trained as ears and lips, to carry on oral conversation with the Dutch; but reading knowledge was prohibited on pain of death. A somewhat similar method was adopted in the case of medical students who flocked to Nagasaki. They were allowed to watch surgical operations performed by the Dutch doctors (some of these were really Germans); they were also allowed to learn the manipulation of instruments—but read elementary books on anatomy they might not. Notwithstanding this ruling, as the authorities began to recognize the usefulness and superiority of Western medical science, the rigour of the law was somewhat slackened, and the interpreters and students were permitted to master the “crab” writing—so called because of the horizontal penmanship of the Occident in contrast to our vertical method.

Thus, in the middle of the eighteenth century, a handful of Japanese succeeded in acquiring a few hundred Dutch words in every-day use.

Such was the beginning of the study of European languages—now one of the most remarkable signs of our national progress, and destined to become more and more significant as our modern history unfolds itself.

Knowledge of the Dutch language was for some decades identified with the medical profession; but, as the fear of foreign invasion and of Christian propaganda lessened, the Government grew somewhat bolder in its attitude to alien tongues, and even encouraged their study within a limited sphere. In 1811 a Translation Bureau was established, but, lodged as it was in the same building as an astronomical Observatory, its activities did not touch the earth closely. In 1854, when the country was

opened to foreign trade, it became absolutely necessary that there should be interpreters and translators, so these had to descend from their lofty outlook. The Bureau was widened in scope and the "Institute for the Examination of Barbarian Books" was erected in its place. Its title was soon changed to the "Institute for the Inspection of Western Books," and eight years later altered again to the "Institute of Progress." "What's in a name?" The name shows what its giver thinks or expects of the thing named.

Dutch was the first modern medium by which Japan came into intellectual contact with the West. And because the science which was first studied in that language was medicine, at the dawn of the Meiji era, when the taboo on foreign tongues was entirely removed, students of medicine turned to German—linguistically so closely related to Dutch—for the reason that they could tap a larger source of knowledge.

In other than medical science, the English language took the lead, because of its commercial importance and because of the early influx of English-speaking missionaries. The good preachers, however, did not monopolize the whole of the pioneer work of spreading the study of languages. Far-seeing Japanese—notably Fukusawa, Nakamura, Neeshima, Okuma—were staunch upholders of Western culture, and they had schools of their own, whence proceeded youthful hosts inspired by a new spirit.

Much as we owe to the missionaries and to private individuals, we cannot deny the fact that the efforts made by the Government were by far the most fruitful. By setting higher standards and imposing strict rules, Government schools and colleges encouraged the introduction of Western science. Fore-

most among them were, of course, the higher institutions of learning, where, in the first two decades of the Meiji era, nearly all lectures on advanced subjects were given by foreign professors in their own tongues. Since then, as technical terms were translated, more and more lectures have been delivered in Japanese by Japanese instructors. Still, inasmuch as specialists must keep abreast of the progress made in their respective lines, all students must be familiar with one or two European languages. And it is just on account of this necessity for linguistic acquisition that our students have to spend a much longer time in school.

When one compares the length of time devoted to language studies with the ability of students to use a foreign tongue, one is struck by a tremendous discrepancy. So lamentably is this the case that one—especially a foreigner—is apt to despair.

The truth is, that in Japan a living language is coveted mainly for purposes of academic learning—as an intellectual tool, and not for colloquial use. Our defective colloquial attainment has two underlying reasons, one being the racial linguistic ineptitude and the other the deplorable lack of ability to “mix” socially. This has been demonstrated on many occasions and from different angles.

Despite these disadvantages, the nation has been diligently studying the chief languages of Europe—English, German, French—and the result has shown itself in various ways.

(1) The most evident effect of the study of foreign languages is the enlargement of the national vocabulary. Hundreds of English words have been incorporated into Japanese. Some of these words can be easily translated, but they are nevertheless used in the original, except in strictly Japanese com-

position. So widespread is the employment of English words, that a man without knowledge of English finds it almost impossible to understand all that is written in daily papers or to follow lectures on any theme. Some of the borrowed words may not enjoy long life. They will sooner or later find fit equivalents in Japanese, and then they will pass away, to be followed by others. Some are sure to remain, to be absorbed in our lexicons, and such will enrich our speech even though they may offend purists.

(2) A highly interesting and useful result of the study of foreign languages, is the fact that it has led to intelligent research of our native tongue. In fact, an anomalous situation was created when an Englishman, Professor Basil Chamberlain, was appointed to the chair of Japanese Phonetics in the Imperial University of Tokyo. We are reminded of the saying of Goethe, "A man who is ignorant of foreign languages is also ignorant of his own language."

(3) As the knowledge of a foreign tongue spreads, the advantages of an alphabetic over a syllabic system of writing suggests itself. Transliteration, or Romanization, by which is meant writing Japanese words in Latin letters of the alphabet, has been a question hotly discussed—as before mentioned.

(4) The study of its tongues has brought the West nearer in every way. It has exerted a potent influence in cultivating the international mind—by which is meant here that attitude of mind which enables one to see things from the world point of view. It is no idle boast to say that, on larger issues, the Japanese think and speak in terms of the West. More of this elsewhere.

(5) It does not take a genius to know that "words are things, and a small drop of ink, falling like dew,



upon a thought, produces that which makes thousands, perhaps millions, think." A foreign word has a power to arouse curiosity and to open a new vista for the imagination. No remedy is so surely antidotal to xenophobia as a foreign tongue. In Japan it is largely by virtue of the English language that her people are introduced into the thought of the West—but, naturally, most intimately into Anglo-Saxon thought. Thus, the study of European languages is not confined in its importance or extent to the schoolroom or academic halls. Their spread has exerted an immense social and political influence. Furthermore, they have proved themselves to be a new force in moulding the very ideas of the nation. Our very language is being threatened by the introduction of thousands of European words, but, henceforth, purists will not be able to defend themselves against the invasion of barbarisms.

From what is going on around us, we may expect the saying of Emerson to apply to Japanese speech more than to English, to which he referred when he said that it will be "the sea that receives tributaries from every region under heaven."

## CHAPTER VI

### LABOUR, FOOD AND POPULATION

“ It is too difficult to think nobly when one thinks only to  
get a livelihood.”—ROUSSEAU.

#### I. HISTORICAL GLANCE AT JAPAN'S POPULATION

THE first reliable census in Japan was taken in 1731, though there was a tolerably accurate estimate made in 1725. The following table is interesting, as showing how small the fluctuation was for nearly a century and a quarter, during a time when famines and epidemics of all sorts had full sway.

	Population.
1726 . . . . .	26,548,998
1732 . . . . .	26,921,816
1744 . . . . .	26,153,450
1750 . . . . .	25,917,830
1756 . . . . .	26,061,830
1762 . . . . .	25,921,458
1768 . . . . .	26,252,057
1774 . . . . .	25,990,451
1786 . . . . .	25,086,466
1792 . . . . .	24,891,441
1798 . . . . .	25,471,033
1804 . . . . .	25,517,729
1816 . . . . .	25,621,957
1828 . . . . .	27,201,400
1834 . . . . .	27,063,907
1846 . . . . .	26,207,625

The numbers would be more correct if a couple of millions were added for each year, since, in the figures given above, nobles, courtiers, *samurai*, beggars and

loafers were not included. Though the accuracy of the census cannot be absolutely relied upon, we shall not be very far from the truth when we state that the population in the Tokugawa Period remained on a uniform level.

Morally, religiously and politically there were encouragements given for fecundity. Publicists identified population with wealth. Religious teachers exhorted parents to leave a large progeny to pray for their souls. Was it, then, physical causes beyond man's control that prevented a larger growth? Partly, of course. The indifferent system of sanitation and the primitive school of medicine were no match for the devastating power of the germs of small-pox, typhoid, cholera, and what not. Unscientific agriculture easily succumbed to the visitations of insect pests, plant diseases and untoward meteorological changes. Thus famine and sickness and other "acts of God" proved potent, positive checks. But Nature can cure the evil she inflicts on man, if he does not wilfully obstruct her work.

It was an open secret in the feudal days that artificial means were adopted to prevent a large family. Economic pressure made the preventive restraint a necessary and normal practice. In an earlier chapter we have seen the strained circumstances to which the *samurai* and the peasants were reduced in shōgunal days. The *samurai* must have an heir, and concubinage helped to enlarge his family. He could easily dispose of his children, either by making them start a branch family, or by having them adopted by other families, or by giving them to the better-to-do merchants, who considered it an honour to adopt a pedigreed son or daughter for a member of their households. But the poor peasants had no way of getting rid of their superfluous offspring

except by abortion or infanticide. The latter practice was known as *higæri*, "returning the self-same day," or *mabiki*, "weeding." In larger cities there were regular practitioners with sign-boards bearing enigmatic legends. Many drugs were on sale with suggestive names and designs. Incantations and charms were used against conception. Should unwelcome babes see the light of day, they were christened with names implying "Stop," "To be the last," and the like.

Repeatedly (*e.g.* in 1645, 1673, 1767) were laws promulgated threatening abortion with severe punishment, but they were not strictly enforced.

Only after the coming of the new era did the population begin to increase, and that at a great rate. Publicists, still feudalistically minded, to whom a large population was an infallible sign of a great State, prosperous on account of more production and strong on account of a large number of defenders, hailed the increase and encouraged it. The increase, however, needed no artificial stimulus. It followed in the wake of the general liberty granted at the Restoration, or, more concretely, of the removal of many obstacles to the exercise of personal freedom by the common people. It was no doubt partly due to the strict enforcement of police regulations against abortion and infanticide; partly, also, to medical and sanitary improvements throughout the country. Only, the blessings of the most advanced sanitation would have been more fruitful of pain to the peasants if they were bound to the soil and their means of subsistence reduced to the minimum standard or even below it.

Under the new régime of freedom land and its occupiers were liberated. Taxes were lightened. Servitude connected with land was annulled. The

peasants could change at will their occupation or their place of abode. Entire freedom was granted them in regard to the *corvée* and to their apparel, food, drink or house-building.

All these new rights were advantageous to the masses at the time when the country had determined upon a new career of industrial revolution. In order to emulate the more advanced nations, first in economic prosperity, and later in imperialistic development, industries of every kind were fostered by the State, and thus was newly created a demand for labour.

A glance at the table below will show how the restraining forces have lost their hold on the people, how laws against infanticide and abortion have been enforced, how sanitary measures have been operating and how economic welfare has encouraged the growth of population. The table does not include the population of Formosa or Korea.

	Population.
1846 . . . . .	26,207,625
1872 . . . . .	33,110,000
1875 . . . . .	33,998,000
1882 . . . . .	36,700,000
1885 . . . . .	37,868,000
1892 . . . . .	41,089,000
1895 . . . . .	42,270,000
1903 . . . . .	46,732,000
1905 . . . . .	47,678,000
1908 . . . . .	49,588,000
1913 . . . . .	53,362,000
1915 . . . . .	54,935,000
1920 . . . . .	55,963,000
1925 . . . . .	59,737,000
1927 . . . . .	61,316,000

## 2. PRESENT CONDITION OF POPULATION

As the average annual rate of increase has of late been about 750,000, we shall probably find the present

population to be approximately 63,000,000. We shall, however, take the more accurate figure of the census as the basis for our discussion.

The mere size of population does not give us an idea of its importance. Let us see, therefore, its distribution. The average density of the whole country is 400 per square mile, which makes it one of the most densely populated countries in the world, only a few highly industrialized lands, such as Belgium, Holland and Great Britain, surpassing it. The degree of density naturally varies in different parts of the country, according to their climate and productivity. When we calculate the density of population, not per square mile of territory, but per cultivated area, the Japanese density is 2490 per square mile, which is twice as great as that of Belgium and over four times that of England. If man were an animal living by bread alone, the population problem in Japan would be four times as grave as in England.

The distribution of population is so unequal that while the central districts are over-crowded, the eastern provinces are so thinly peopled that thousands of families could be comfortably settled there. Round about Tokyo the density is 5538.

There is a tendency here, as everywhere else, for population to concentrate in urban centres, where attractions of various kinds are becoming more and more powerful. Not only do the cities offer a wider field of employment, but their doubtful allurements draw crowds from rustic dwellings. The criminal elements, both young and old, wend their way to cities.

There are 101 cities in the country. Of these twenty-two have a population of over 100,000. Osaka heads the list with over 2,400,000, followed by Tokyo with 2,300,000. Then come Nagoya (905,000), Kyôto (760,000), Kobe (760,000), and Yokohama

(550,000). The twenty-two largest cities have altogether about 9,000,000 inhabitants, which is 15 per cent. of the whole population. The proportion of males to females in cities is respectively 112 to 100—a proportion quite different from that which obtains for the nation at large. The ratio for the whole country is 101 males to 100 females.

Towns with a population of less than 20,000 seem to be decreasing in size. As yet, however, over 60 per cent. of the population live in towns of less than 10,000 inhabitants. Small country towns, or villages with a population numbering 2-5,000, predominate, over 37 per cent. of the people being denizens of such communities.

One of the gravest questions connected with the population problem is that of equable distribution. The Imperial Commission on Food and Population laid particular stress on this phase of the problem, and has made recommendations for the encouragement of local industries, to keep people in the country.

That life in the country is more conducive to health is generally believed, though this has become more and more questioned in view of sanitary improvements in cities. From the character of the youths who come up for conscription, however, we may accept the old belief as still holding true.

One characteristic of rural life is early marriage for both sexes, and consequently a larger ratio of births. It seems that, as far as the death-rate is concerned, cities have a more favourable showing, due largely to the fact that there are more young men and women in the prime of life in the cities than in the country. While the average birth-rate is about thirty-four per mille for the whole country, in the less advanced north-east it rises above forty. The average death-rate is slightly below twenty per

mille. There are several provinces where it is over twenty-two—indeed two provinces show a high mortality rate of twenty-six!

Since the country-side is a feeder of town-life, more than half the population of Tokyo and Osaka is country-born. Other cities, too, are replenished by fresh blood from outside. In this matter Japan has nothing to show in contrast to the rest of the world. Whether this migration into cities is to prove a permanent phenomenon, or, if not, how long it will continue, is a question to which we have as yet no data for reply. The rate of the urban increase may vary from time to time, according as the demand for work varies, but as a general tendency we see no abatement.

That the incoming of country youths into cities has the effect of raising the mental standard of cities seems likely—though it must be admitted that this is in a measure counterbalanced by additions from the ranks of inferior intelligence. For the migration from the country to the city is not always selective in character.

Concerning emigration out of the country, it is numerically insignificant. Too often is colonization proposed as a solution for over-population. It is only natural to connect the two things. But, as a matter of fact, emigration has rarely been a remedy for the evils of saturated population. How little Cyrenaica and Eritrea help Italy to solve the population problem! Of how much use is the Congo to Belgium, or Angola to Portugal, or Rio de Oro to Spain! In recent years about 20,000 Japanese have annually left these shores. More than half—10,000 to 12,000—have made Brazil their destination, and about 2000 to 3000 have gone to the Philippine Islands. To Peru and Canada, about 1000 find their way.



It is unfortunate for Japan, and internationally mischievous, that a vague fear prevails—encouraged in California and Australia—that Japan is sending out swarms of undesirable emigrants all over the world—a fear contradicted by facts. The Japanese are by nature and by tradition stay-at-home people. They would stick to their little plots rather than move to another part of their own country. They hate to migrate even to Formosa or to Korea to settle there. Even though the Brazilian Government and Brazilian companies offer inducements, our farmers do not easily make up their minds to cross the seas to distant lands, and such of the Japanese as are ready to move will probably not stay abroad to the end of their lives. They need encouragement and stimulus to leave their country. And yet the Government is cautious in this matter, lest its citizens proceed to countries where they are not welcome. The Imperial Committee on Food and Population has clearly stated in its Recommendations that the Government should by no means give encouragement to its people to migrate to any foreign country without the full consent and understanding of the authorities of that country.

Having seen the geographical distribution of our population, we shall now take a look at its distribution according to age. We shall find a rather remarkable feature in this, which is, that in this matter, as in so many others, Japan stands midway between the more advanced and the less progressive States of Europe. Taking the population at 59,737,000, there are

Below 14	.	.	.	21,924,000, or 37 per cent.
From 15 to 59	.	.	.	33,224,000, or 55 "
Above 60	.	.	.	4,589,000, or 8 "

When we compare the number of productive persons (between fifteen and sixty years of age), our case is decidedly more unfavourable than that of Germany, 68 per cent. of whose citizens belong to this category, or of England or France, each with 63 per cent. It is rather striking, however, that Japan, with all her traditional reverence for age, has no more than 7 per cent. of her population above the sexagenarian limit, whereas Spain has twice as many. Other Latin countries—Italy and France—also have a larger proportion of the senile than Japan.

Thus the present condition of our population is on the whole natural and normal, as far as its rate of increase and local distribution are concerned. It is certainly desirable that the rate of mortality should be reduced, and with this arises the question, "Should births be controlled?"

There are two sharply opposed schools of thought on this question, one advocating the absolute need of birth-control, in the interest of the whole nation, and especially of the labouring classes, and the other upholding as strongly the need of an ever-increasing population for military and industrial aggrandizement. There are those who contend for a preventive measure in the name of religion, and others who stigmatize it as an act of impiety. Science is also called upon for the vindication of birth-control, and, contrariwise, scientific authorities are quoted to denounce the act. But behind and beneath all the bickering arguments, the practice seems to be gaining ground. Why are so many admirable reasons against it discarded? Why are the old traditions that connect fecundity with blessings on the way to oblivion? The reason is exceedingly simple—the country is on the margin of saturation,

and no amount of emotional appeal can prevent the control unless it be accompanied by a promise of better economic prospects. The whole nation will turn proletarian—not in the sense said to have been originally used by Servius Tullius, but in the sense that it will be too full of progeny.

Various estimates have been made by statisticians as to the probable future growth of our population, and, while these have been reached by diverse methods and show different figures, the following table will give some idea of the possibility that lies before the Japanese people.

1935	.	.	.	.	.	67,275,000
1945	.	.	.	.	.	75,758,000
1955	.	.	.	.	.	85,325,000
1965	.	.	.	.	.	108,821,000

Another estimate looks to the year 2201 as one when the population will have reached the 100 million mark.

How effectively the land can support so many souls is the gist of the so-called Food Problem, and invites the most serious study. In the meantime, the growth of the population is regarded in some quarters as an infallible index of the nation's progress in general and of her military strength in particular. It supplies cheap labour to our expanding industries. It supplies cannon-fodder in case of need. It supplies man-power to colonize the waste places of the earth at home and abroad. To the individual, too, a large family is a matter of pride. It shows the virility of the parents and assures the continuance of the family name.

It is gravely to be doubted, however, whether industries based on cheap labour can permanently compete with those supported by well-paid workmen.

Mr. Ford's experiments are full of instruction for us. Slave-labour was discarded long ago as economically ruinous—injurious alike to the slave-holder and to the slave himself. Unrestricted increase of population means the glut of the labour market, which in turn means reduced wages and more hours of work, as well as the lowering of the level of the standard of living—a condition approaching the status of slavery, whatever name it may bear. A retrograde movement of this kind cannot be tolerated in any civilized country which co-operates with the rest of the world in the advancement of labour legislation, the more so as labour gets more and more fluid and flows where there is a market for it. In an age when democracy raises the political and economic status of wage-earners, in an age when the sense of social justice is elevating the dignity of workers, an industry whose existence depends on the cheapness of labour will find itself in an exceedingly precarious situation.

### 3. THE FOOD PROBLEM

How to feed the growing population is the beginning and the end of the population problem. Taking rice as the standard food, the relation between its demand and supply is the determining factor of the problem.

Let us take an ordinary year (say, 1928) as a typical year to illustrate the question at issue.

We get rice from the following sources :—

Brought forward from 1927	.	.	28,640,000 bushels
Crop in 1928	.	.	310,500,000 "
Imported from Korea	.	.	30,000,000 "
" " Formosa	.	.	15,000,000 "
" " other countries	.	.	10,000,000 "
Total			394,140,000 bushels

From this total must be subtracted 25,000,000 bushels, which, according to experience, is the quantity most likely to be in storage for the next year. This leaves roughly 370,000,000 bushels as available food (rice) supply for a year. And over against this, what is the nation's demand for this cereal?

Consumption in 1928	.	.	.	345,000,000 bushels
Exportation in 1928	.	.	.	4,000,000 „
				<hr/>
Total	.	.	.	349,000,000 bushels

The calculation shows the excess of supply over demand to be about 20,000,000 bushels. But when we take into account that this amount is much less than half the import from overseas, it is clear that the country is far from being self-supporting in its diet.

The Imperial Commission on Food and Population has sketched a comprehensive plan, according to which the nation can be fed entirely by home produce. The plan requires £270,000,000 in money and thirty years in time. Annual returns for several decades past have shown (except on very rare occasions of bad harvest) a steady increase both in the acreage and production. Not to go further back than one decade :—

Decade.	Yearly Rice Crop in bushels.	Average Crop per acre.
1880-89	156,338,735	25·38
1890-99	199,050,860	28·64
1900-9	230,557,675	31·78
1910-19	270,148,890	35·52
1920-29	294,534,370	37·30

The average rice crop per acre in 1880 was 23½ bushels, that of the year 1930 was 39—a gain of 57 per cent. As in this interval the area of the paddy-fields increased from 6,370,000 acres to 8,000,000, or by about 25 per cent., the total production of rice has increased from about 150,000,000 bushels to about 310,000,000. That is to say, the principal food product has more than doubled in the last half-century, whereas population has increased by about 72 per cent.

Has the country now reached its saturation point, with not an acre more to feed the coming generation? Or is it possible to extend the margin of cultivation?

There are still extensive plains of virgin land in Hokkaidô, not to speak of Korea and Formosa. A survey shows that nearly 4,000,000 acres can be converted into farms in Hokkaidô, upon which 2,000,000 people could be settled. But it will take £96,000,000 and perhaps twenty years for the realization of this scheme. In the interior of the main island there are still large tracts of waste land, now lying idle, which could be reclaimed into fertile fields under a proper system of drainage or irrigation. The extent of such land is estimated to be somewhere in the neighbourhood of 3,000,000 acres, half of which can be irrigated by installing electric pumps requiring only 200,000 kw. at the rate of 0·15 kw. per acre. Already several thousand electric motors have been set up for agricultural operations, and in this respect the future looks hopeful. Not only for irrigation, but for draining smaller lakes and marshlands, electricity will henceforth be brought into use, and thus the margin of cultivation will be immensely widened.

But there is another way to increase the production

of food, and that is by a more intensive system of agriculture. We have seen how the yield of rice per acre has greatly improved of late; yet the average for the whole country has not reached 40 bushels per acre.

Here there is a mark for agriculturists to strive after; but it will take decades before even the half-way to this mark can be reached. In the meantime, wages will rise and, not unlikely, rice will fall in price. The supply from the oversea territories, Korea and Formosa, which is at present 30,000,000 bushels, can be quite easily augmented, due to their favourable climate and abundance of cheap labour. The farmers of Japan are now alarmed at the prospect of being ousted in the home market by their oversea rivals. The recent low price of rice was partly attributed to the inroad made by the colonial grain. The purchase of a large quantity by the Government, in order to keep up the price, has proved a doubtful device.

We have thus far chiefly considered the quantitative side of rice production—certainly a very important side, since the nation has been consuming a larger quantity not only *en gross*, but per head of population. A half-century ago the average quantity of rice consumed per head of population was 7 *to* (about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  bushels) per year.

Agriculture is thus in a painful period of transition. It must undergo transition from empiricism to rationalism, from a sentimental calling to a business undertaking, from the monoculture of rice to the cultivation of other crops—perhaps some of them of industrial and technological value.

The food-yielding capacity of the sea is apt to be overlooked. It has been computed that the same quantity of vitamins can be obtained from a shilling's

worth of beef as from a three-halfpence worth of salted salmon, or, better still, from dried herring which can be bought for one-third of a penny. Or, if calories come up for consideration, a shilling's worth of beef gives no more than twopence worth of salted salmon or a halfpenny worth of dried herring.

These last remarks are made only to show what possibilities exist, and to hint at the invention of a synthetic diet—but not to justify or advocate the idea that a swarming population should subsist on the minimum amount of the lowest form of food. A beggar's life is not worth living. And a nation or an individual with any sense and self-respect will not rush to extremes. Whether consciously or unconsciously, man, even when blinded, pauses before he reaches the precipice. He has an innate sense of equilibrium. Mr. Pearl did not choose as the material of his study only advanced societies. He choose even the lowest forms of animals to demonstrate, first "that rate of reproduction or fertility is negatively correlated with density of population"; secondly, "that birth-rate is negatively correlated with wealth, and that the differential birth-rate on this economic base constitutes one of the menacing features of human population growth"; and, thirdly, "that the indirect psychological and social effects of relative poverty as contrasted with relative wealth express themselves definitely and clearly in the sexual activity of human beings, and through sexual activity to birth-rates."

In view of the strange fear in many quarters that over-population in Japan may turn out to be a source of world menace, it behooves us to consider the question coolly and calmly in the spirit of science.



#### 4. THE UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEM

When there is disproportion between the means of subsistence or, what amounts to the same thing, the means of keeping people engaged in obtaining these, there is a surplus of labour, and we are confronted with the unemployment problem. At least, it is in this sense that we shall treat the question.

In an overcrowded country, unemployment is chronic. Indeed, employment is a measure whereby a country is to be judged as to whether it is overpopulated or not. In Australia or America, where the density of population is so low that the land can potentially support several times the present number of its inhabitants, even there unemployment can exist—as is actually the case—when there is, it may be temporarily, no means of engaging the population in productive activity. As to Japan, she has always had surplus labour. But there are three reasons why the phenomenon was not more glaringly apparent. Foremost among these was the family system, which made it morally obligatory for the family to take care of an indigent member. There was no legal compulsion, and the duty was voluntarily assumed. It is a beautiful system, provided the supporting party undertakes it in the spirit of Christian charity and the dependent party accepts it with gratitude. Such reciprocal goodwill is not the usual propensity of human nature. Untold tragedies, as well as comedies, are being enacted behind the curtain of this traditional régime. Not infrequently does it end in the mutual pauperization of all concerned. Whatever be the dark side of the picture, the old sense of family responsibility—including, of course, the shame and opprobrium attached to allowing a member of one's family, however dis-

tantly connected, to become a public charge—has kept the extent of unemployment in the background.

The second reason is, that while the main part of the population is engaged in agriculture, unemployment cannot exist in so acute a form as to become a social question. The day's meal can be got on the poorest farm, and a straw cot can give shelter against the night's dew. If health permits, an unskilled hand can find something to do in the country. But with the progress of urbanization and capitalistic production, unemployment assumes a peculiar importance, and with the progress of democracy and of relief it becomes a profession. In Japan it has not yet reached this stage.

Still another reason why unemployment does not attain in Japan that magnitude which it does in Europe or America, is that there is more mobility in our labour. The operatives who are dismissed from one factory are quite ready and satisfied to find elsewhere a job for which they may get only half as much as they previously did.

While these reasons are well grounded, and alleviate the condition of the labouring population in hard times, the forces which counteract them are also in operation. The family system is weakening; people would rather starve in cities than barely subsist in the country; they become less and less content with a minimum wage. Moreover, causes are operating which throw more and more people out of work.

These causes are partly world-wide. The general business depression in Europe and America brings in its train less demand for foreign articles, particularly those characterized as luxuries—for instance, silk. This tells immediately on the silk trade. Of

the internal causes, we may say that some date back to the period of the War, while others are of more recent origin. The war-time boom was destined to collapse, and in the course of a dozen years after its termination twice was the warning given—once in 1920 and once again in 1927. The earthquake of 1923 was still another warning. As a Chinese proverb says, "Illness comes not when the patient falls sick, but when he imbibes the cause of illness." The later—and what would appear to be the immediate—cause of unemployment lies in the negative policy of the Government.

The policy of thrift and retrenchment, rightly emphasized by the Government, is no doubt partly responsible for business depression. The Government, always the greatest consumer, cut down its expenditure by about £90 millions. Some customary or expected public works were suspended. In local finances, too, loans were discouraged, thus stopping local enterprises. Private individuals were entreated to observe thrift. All these well-meant measures decreased the nation's demand for labour. And the very method resorted to in making industries more remunerative—namely, rationalization—has had the consequence of ousting labour from mills. What the American economists are complaining of as "technological unemployment"—that is to say, the introduction of automatic machines in industry and business circles—is not altogether absent from this part of the world.

For these reasons, then, unemployment has greatly increased of late. Though statistics of the unemployed are very imperfect, the comparison of the two following tables, prepared by the Social Welfare Bureau of the Home Department, will disclose the depressing tendency of our labour market.

June 1931	Number Investigated.	Number Unemployed.	Percentage.
Salaried Workers.	1,571,275	66,654	4.24
Workers paid daily	1,485,324	143,565	9.67
Other Workers .	3,481,245	161,202	4.16
Total .	6,537,844	381,421	5.38

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1929-31.	Number Investigated.	Number Unemployed.	Percentage.
September 1929 .	6,599,778	268,590	4.07
January 1930 .	6,911,348	340,488	4.93
June „ .	7,070,600	361,916	5.12
January 1931 .	6,888,968	371,802	5.39
June „ .	6,537,844	381,421	5.38

Since the above returns were published, there has been a rapid increase in the workless—so much so that experts roughly calculate that their number has reached the million mark. The relief of the unemployed has thus become the most pressing question of the day. But what remedial plans have been made? The question is not exactly new, and the Government has been doing something. It may be asked, How effectively? It is indeed a question in view of the overwhelming army of the unemployed—numbering 30,000,000 in the civilized states of the West—whether there has anywhere been evolved any effective measures to cope with this social cancer.

When the Japanese Government first took action to relieve unemployment it subsidized half of the total wages involved by expenditure and earmarked for public works during the winter. This experiment was restricted to the six largest cities. During four years the Government spent £60,000 to £90,000, to relieve workers varying in number from 610,000 to

965,000. But the method was given up because of the obvious trend of the workless towards the cities.

The project outlined by the present Government as soon as it came into power was, similarly, to give a subsidy equal to half the total wages involved in expenses for new enterprises—enterprises undertaken by public corporations with a view to relieving the unemployed of the six biggest cities or of any other cities where workless people were specially numerous. With the great increase of unemployment in 1930, a much larger project is contemplated.

According to the report of the Social Welfare Bureau, it is estimated that the number of workless people relieved by this scheme amounted, in the fiscal year of 1929, to over 2,780,000, and in the fiscal year of 1930 (the time of writing) will amount to more than 1,500,000.

In addition to the above scheme, the Government has decided to subsidize the six biggest cities, should they undertake public works for the purpose of giving work to small wage-earners. This subsidy is also estimated to cover half the expense of the enterprises.

In accordance with Government plans, the total expense for enterprises was estimated, in 1929, at nearly £131,000, with nearly 130,000 workless people to be relieved. The percentage of those who procured employment has been decreasing yearly, due to the increasing difficulty in earning livelihood, as well as to the depression in business. Among females, on the contrary, the number of those who secured employment stands at over 40 per cent. It is, of course, true that this high proportion of women workers was due to their cheaper wages.

One of the most effective agencies for improving the labour market is the establishment of employment offices. This was deemed so important

by the International Labour Conference in Geneva that it passed a strong recommendation of the plan. Japan, as if to apologize for not always coming up to the standards set by that body for labour legislation, set an example to the world by establishing employment bureaux throughout the country. Of such, there are at present nearly 200—all operated by the local government free of charge. There are, besides, innumerable private agencies for the purpose.

The State is really restricted by the limited funds at its disposal. A political organization does not seem to be the only agent for work of this kind. In principle, too, it is still doubtful whether there is such a right as that to work.

It is not necessary, however, to discuss the abstract theory of the right to work, when a nation is confronted with the concrete fact of thousands of starving men with no work and with no bread. The urgent measures under contemplation are—

- (1) That local governments should undertake relief work for the unemployed, with the consent of the central Government ;

- (2) That the amount to be paid in relief work as wages should form at least one-third of the whole expenditure ;

- (3) That the Government should give a subsidy for local relief work amounting to half the sum to be paid as wages ;

- (4) That the Government should give consent to the raising of local loans, when their object is the relief of the unemployed.

Such are the direct steps to be taken for the alleviation of suffering ; but there are some steps which are indirect, though none the less important.

Inasmuch as one of the causes of the present unemployment is the trade depression partly due to the retrenchment policy of the Government, the relaxation of that policy may have a stimulating effect on trade. As retrenchment necessitates thrift, and even parsimony, it cannot encourage spending ; but its ultimate aim being to reduce the demand for foreign goods, it is not at all opposed to spending for home-made articles. Thus, the encouragement given to home industries will serve the double purpose of bringing about a favourable balance of trade and of preventing unemployment.

#### 5. GENERAL CHARACTER OF LABOUR MOVEMENT

Unemployment would obviously never have assumed its present magnitude and importance—almost challenging the State and society, as though “ the right to live ” had been violated—if labour had not attained the power it has. The problem is transforming itself from an economic to a political platform. It may even penetrate the region of philosophy and ethics.

Unemployment is only an aspect, then, of the labour question, itself a small part of a far larger problem of “ natural rights.” “ The right to live ” and “ the right to labour ” are doctrines by no means forgotten, though they were neglected by the Individualism and Liberalism of the nineteenth century.

The difficulty regarding “ the right to live ” “ turns largely,” as Dr. Bonar says, “ on the relations of the members of the people to their welfare as a whole.” And the right to unemployment is only a corollary of that of living. Hence, as the claims of Labour and Democracy wax greater, the question of employment or its converse—unemployment—is

destined to become more serious. Strange to say, we recognize in the Japanese *Kokutai* a fecund germinal idea of the protection of labour. The protection of labour and the promotion of its interests are ideologically closely related with the family system, and therefore with that form of nationalism which has grown out of it. It should not be surprising, therefore, if the Japanese Royal House should entertain deep solicitude for the interests of labour. At the same time, it is surprising that the Government has too often been wary of, and sometimes hostile to, the labour leaders.

The labour question, in the modern sense of the term, made its first appearance in this country in the last years of the nineteenth century, as a result of the sudden economic prosperity following in the wake of the Sino-Japanese War. Attempts at combination among the labouring population were frequently made and as frequently frustrated by the authorities, on the ground of public safety. Any assertion of the claim of labour to social justice was considered a public nuisance, if not a positive menace. Nevertheless, strikes, more or less organized, occurred in those days; and their cessation was due more to the business slump at the beginning of this century than to the surveillance of the police. The general quiescence of the labour world was broken with the opening of the war with Russia, only to resume its silent career after a few years of prosperity.

Let it be noted here that modern industrial development in Japan was the creation of the State, first encouraged to compete with, or check, the economic penetration of Western Powers. It was not due to the natural play of unencumbered economic forces. This is not the place to discuss the innate weakness



of the State-aided industries, nor the virtues of a laissez-faire policy. When, within the brief space of a decade, the nation was suddenly called upon to confront two hostile countries, many times its superiors in wealth, area and population, it was not possible to live up to the Manchester doctrine. To do so would have spelt national suicide. Some of the war industries had to be fostered within the country itself, even if they were not always profitable.

From the very dawn of the Meiji era, some of the larger enterprises—shipping, railway transportation, manufacture of ammunition, etc.—were undertaken by the Government, either directly as State enterprises or under the guise of private business, with special grants or protection of the fisc.

A strange mental aberration has ensued from this affiliation of large business with State interest. To invest in "big business"—dubious as that may be—or to patronize it, was called a "patriotic duty." Capitalists posed as public benefactors and patriotic citizens. The consequence of this mode of thinking was that any counter-claim against capitalists was regarded somewhat as treason and betrayal of public trust.

Capitalism in Japan can trace its genesis to the latter days of the Tokugawa Period, but it was at that time only a cotyledonous plant, nourished later by the Sino-Japanese War, and watered by the Russo-Japanese War, and greatly nurtured by the Great War. It was a child of wars.

But nowhere does Capitalism inherit the whole earth. When there is manifest a sign of this tendency, the world regains balance by arousing opposite powers against it. Since Capitalism—at least after its fight against Feudalism—is prone to organize itself rapidly into a conservative, static

force, the powers which oppose it are dynamic and revolutionary in character. These are represented by labour or trades unions and by idealism or intellectual lovers of social justice. In Japan, the consciousness of the labouring class was chiefly aroused by the intellectuals, whose interest was at first largely theoretical and later didactic. Except in isolated instances, emotional philanthropists played only a small part.

## 6. PROGRESS OF LABOUR UNIONS

Early attempts at organizing labour ended in failure, disappearing out of existence under police pressure and general lack of public sympathy. Only one of them—the Yuai Kai—first established in 1912, survived disappointments and disapprovals, partly because it was at first not political in its avowed object, but largely educational, as its name, which means a Society of Friendly Love, suggests, and also because it had for its guiding spirit a disinterested plodding young lawyer.

In 1918 there were only eleven trades unions in the country; but, due to the temporary prosperity created by the War, their number increased to seventy-one in the course of a single year. An unprecedented rise in wages made the labouring population more aggressive, and not a few ambitious youths, as well as philanthropic idealists, seized the opportunity to swim with the tide. The Yuai Kai itself underwent a radical change in its organization. It was no longer to be a merely educational body, controlled and managed by its founder and president, Mr. Bunji Suzuki. It was christened Federation of Labour (*Rôdô Sôdômei*). Not only its policy, but also its spirit was changed, and it was henceforth to be aggressive in advancing the rights of labour.

The full significance of the rise of this society is seen much more clearly when one puts it side by side with the progress of a powerful body which suddenly darted into existence under the name of the Association for Conciliation of Labour and Capital—a society started by a group of men of wealth and influence.

This Association was naturally looked upon with suspicion by labour, and it could not advance far in the work it purported to do. It remains now as an institution chiefly occupied with the survey and documentation of social and labour situations. In the meantime labour has continued to organize itself.

The labour movement so auspiciously inaugurated was to suffer immediate discomfiture. Business depression in the early part of 1920, following the war boom, slackened the demand for labour. If we take the frequency of strikes as the index of labour activity, we shall notice a severe set-back in 1920. The following table gives the number of strikes which resulted in the closing of factories during the decade of 1914-23 :—<sup>1</sup>

1914 . . .	50	1919 . . .	497
1915 . . .	64	1920 . . .	282
1916 . . .	108	1921 . . .	246
1917 . . .	398	1922 . . .	250
1918 . . .	417	1923 . . .	263

A great step was taken in the uplift of labour when an obnoxious article in the so-called Public Peace Act was abrogated in 1926. It was frequently

<sup>1</sup> After 1923 the number of strikes has shown no great change except in the year 1930.

1924 . . .	333	1928 . . .	393
1925 . . .	293	1929 . . .	571
1926 . . .	495	1930 . . .	906
1927 . . .	383		

These involved workers varying in number from 36,000 to 80,000.

alleged that this article restricted the freedom to strike, consequently freedom of combination.

The query may well be made, "Are labour unions founded on the real needs of the industrial population or on the dreams of their theoretical leaders?" It soon became evident that the men at the helm were many of them syndicalists of an advanced type, but with no insight into the realities of the labour problem. This fact was proved by the troubles which arose in 1920 within the camp of unionists, where the Moderates and the Radicals vied for supremacy. The Radical claims of labour did not fare any better in the succeeding year, when the business situation grew worse.

The internal split has as yet by no means been healed. According to the investigations made by the Social Welfare Bureau of the Home Office, there are at present (end of 1930) 712 trade unions, comprising 354,312 workers, of whom 13,090 are women. As the total number of workers engaged in factories, mines and transportation works is 4,713,002, the percentage of organized workers is about 7.5. There are nine large federations of these unions, and they constitute as much as two-thirds of organized labour.

With the increasing consciousness of power, Labour enters the field of politics. Divided as they were into a dozen groups, at loggerheads one with another, the so-called Have-nots Party made their political debut in the autumn of 1927, at the time of the prefectural elections. Over 200 candidates contested with the experienced nominees of other parties, and succeeded in recording votes sufficient to elect twenty-eight representatives. Out of these thirteen belonged to the left wing of the Labour Farmer Party, which was ordered to disband in 1928, on account of extreme views. The success attained at the pre-

fectural elections was a stimulus to take a more ambitious step in the national election of 1928, in which the proletarian parties supported eighty-eight candidates and obtained eight seats, polling no less than 489,573 votes, a number large enough to have won at least thirty seats in the House of Representatives if the parties had worked in unison. The result of the recent election (Feb., 1930) was five successful candidates out of ninety-three, polling altogether 502,313 votes. Concerted action on the part of the Have-nots seems at this moment to be out of the question. There is an irreconcilable temper reigning in the various factions, which shows itself upon all occasions whenever a controversial subject is touched.

The milder and more reasonable Right, the Social Democrats, cut itself loose from its communistic confrères. We may compare the latter with the Bolsheviks, with whom, indeed, they are in communication, as are the former with the British Labour Party.

## 7. PROLETARIAN PARTIES

The so-called proletarian parties consist mainly, though not wholly, of labour organizations. Some of the constituent organizations are made up of students or young journalists and artists. If they were all united in one body and presented a solid front it would prove a formidable force, able to defy any of the existing bourgeoisie combinations. But as yet they are split into conflicting factions, ready to fly at each others' throats. They lack statesmanship.

In the last decades there appeared several parties, all claiming to represent labour interests or non-property classes. Most of them were inchoate. They quarrelled one with another, then coalesced—

to separate again ; like the wealthy ladies of Juvenal's time, " they married in order to divorce and divorced in order to marry." But throughout their constant or, rather, their inconstant dissensions, there runs one common and serious note—the cry of the disinherited—the discontent with the existing order of society. The discord in the camps was due to the choice of means which were proposed as a way of social salvation. The right wing, which is the most stable and sane, would tolerate no violence and would pursue its way through existing parliamentary channels—in a word, by a legal method. The left wing would resort to direct action ; it finds hope in general destruction—and when it is asked what may be expected after the wished-for catastrophe, it answers that it cannot prophesy, nor does it care. That is its much-vaunted " ideology."

As things stand at present, there are four main proletarian parties. Beginning with the right, we may take up first the Social Democrats (*Shakai Minshû*), whose planks run as follows :—

(1) We believe, and desire to realize the belief, that only by perfecting political and economic institutions on the basis of the labouring classes, can a wholesome national life be established.

(2) Recognizing in the capitalistic system of production and distribution an obstacle to a wholesome national life, we desire to reform it by legitimate means.

(3) We oppose both the existing parties that represent the privileged classes and the Radical parties that ignore the processes of social evolution.

The Social Democrats, as one may judge from their planks, are the reproduction of Fabianism in

this country. Their leaders are thoughtful, earnest men, generally respected if not beloved. In elections they do not condescend to the tricks of the trade, but they have the sympathy and the approbation of a large number of the intelligentsia. The party is often charged by its rival proletarian groups with harbouring a Fascistic ambition. The absence of the rural element in this party is at once its weakness, in possessing a narrow basis, and its strength, in having homogeneity.

Consisting of well-educated men, there is naturally a good deal of professional dispute among the Social Democrats, and quite recently, as the result of such a schism, a new party, differing but little from the old except in personnel, was formed under the name of Nation-wide Populace Party (*Zen-koku Minshutō*), with the following platform :—

(1) Our party represents the interests of all manual workers and non-propertied classes, including the labourer, the farmer, the small tradesman, the small artisan, the commercial employé and salaried man.

(2) Our party desires the emancipation of the labouring and non-propertied classes, by perfecting political, economic, social and cultural institutions, on the basis of the labouring and non-propertied classes.

(3) Our party fights for the accomplishment of its object in a legitimate way, by the organized power of the labouring and non-propertied classes.

Closely allied to the above, but more tinged with radicalism, is the Japan Masses Party (*Nippon Taishûtō*) with the following platform :—

(1) Our party desires to effect, consistently with the condition of our country, the political,

economic and social emancipation of the labouring, farming and non-propertied citizens.

(2) Our party desires to reform, by legitimate means, the laws and institutions regarding the present irrational distribution of land products.

(3) Our party represents the interests of the non-propertied classes, and desires to reform the various political institutions monopolized by the propertied classes.

One may be struck by the wording of the first article, where "consistently with the actual condition of the country" is emphasized. The expression is weaker than "national life"—a term used by the Social Democrats; but the addition of this short phrase gives a more concrete and practical turn than the announcement of a universal and abstract principle, as is the case of the most advanced platform given out by the Party of Labourers and Peasants (*Rônô-to*). This last organization has passed through many vicissitudes in the short space of its existence. It has changed its name several times. At first it openly advocated violence. It spat fire. It prided itself on being an agent of the Third International. But police inspection and the authorities were too much for it, and now, in a new form, it partially disguises its venomous fangs, though still hesitating to recognize the use of "legitimacy" in the prosecution of its plans. Its planks are rather vague, and sound very much like a translation from a foreign—possibly the Russian—language.

(1) Our party fights for the protection and enlargement of the daily advantage of the labourer, farmer and other non-propertied citizens, and of all other oppressed peoples.



(2) Our party holds it as its principal duty to extend and strengthen the unions of farmers and labourers.

(3) Our party desires the union of all proletarian classes at their fighting front.

(4) Our party fights for the attainment (acquirement, obtainment) of political liberty by all oppressed peoples.

The aspirations of the *Rōnō-tō* are general. By referring to "all oppressed peoples," it leaves us to surmise that *their interest* is not restricted to one nation or country, and, by omitting any allusion to legitimate means in carrying out its object, it evades the real character of its tactics—namely, not to pay heed to legitimacy or to the legality of its methods. It took the party some time to admit the utility of a national assembly, and then only as a place most convenient to aid its own propaganda. Although the police authorities are reticent on the subject, it seems fairly certain that the party is largely financed by the Soviet Government. From time to time arrests have been made of Communists guilty of some heinous crimes, and many of those arrested are members of the *Rōnō-tō*. Among the guilty are extreme types of lofty idealists, unselfishly devoted to the good of humanity.

The everlasting schism is largely due to the varied elements of its composition—trade unionists, tenants and petit-bourgeois. It cannot be denied that in the world of labour there is such a thing as labour aristocracy, and each element is jealous of its position and rights. If possible, more jealousy exists there than in aristocracy itself. Dissensions among the various parties in the camp of Labour are due first to political views, secondly to personal ani-

mosities, thirdly to sentimental reasons. What will unite them is the consciousness of their common interests, of their rights and liberty, and of social justice. Many a time have they made efforts at amalgamation in order to effect a concerted campaign. They met to discuss co-operation and mutual conciliation; but so far they have failed to accomplish this. They have not found a common formula which they could all endorse, a common principle for which they could stand or fall together, a common truth which would embrace all the petty differences and harmonize all the conflicting views.

Repeated and bitter failures at elections have not yet taught them how or where to unite. As long as they are engrossed with the thought of class-interests, as long as they grovel in the materialistic conception of human history, so long will they be unable to obtain what they really want. This is perhaps too severe a view to take of a political party; for idealism is the last thing to expect of such a body. We must judge it by a lower standard. Parties which have been more successful than the proletarian factions cannot be said to entertain a loftier conception of their missions. Probably their success was due to baser means than those adopted by the Proletarians—means supplied by wealthy persons and corporations, called by Woodrow Wilson “an invisible government,” whose sordid interests they promised to serve. Probably, too, the success of the major parties was due to the official glamour imparted to them by their founders—Ito, Okuma, Katsura.

Proletarian, or Labour, political parties have this to be said in their praise, that they have been purer in motive and cleaner in operation. Their great strength lies in having their basis on the mass of the people, the common people, whom God has made in such

numbers. If their spokesmen can truly echo their voice, instead of talking a foreign jargon to them; if their leaders can really guide them along the road chartered in national traditions, instead of pointing them to outlandish paths, then will the Proletarian movement in this country prove a beneficent power.

As in everything else, so in the Labour movement, foreign influences are a powerful factor, whether it be the "ideology" of the Marxian school, the example of the Labour Cabinet of Great Britain, or the resolutions and recommendations of Labour Conferences.

#### 8. JAPANESE LABOUR FOLLOWING THE INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

Archimedes has found in Geneva the right place to move the world. With the League of Nations and the Labour Conference as a fulcrum, and with international conventions and discussions as a lever, public opinion can exert a power out of all proportion to its size by elevating the social load in all parts of the world. Japan owes much to the International Labour Conference. This is doing more than raising the labour standard in this country: it is bringing the East and the West nearer together.

When the International Labour Conference, proposed in Part XIII of the Versailles Treaty, first met in Washington, in 1919, Japan distinguished herself—first, by the enormous number of her delegates, followed by no less an enormous number of representatives of her Press; and, secondly, by signing the convention containing articles much too advanced for her economic conditions. The first fact was surprising, because there were more Japanese newspaper correspondents at Washington than at Paris during the Peace Conference. The second was more

startling, because at Versailles, when Part XIII of the treaty was under discussion, the Japanese delegates showed much hesitation, verging on reluctance, to commit themselves to any definite promises. Those who are acquainted with Japanese psychology, and who read through their habitual reticence, knew that their reluctance was due not to the disavowal of the principles and ideals prohibiting child labour, but to the scruple lest, after signing the treaty, they might fail to enforce all its terms.

The same sense of honour explains why the Japanese delegation in Washington agreed to all the principles laid down in the Labour Conference, with reservations: (1) that the minimum age of children employed in factories should be twelve instead of fourteen, provided they had finished their elementary education; (2) children between twelve and fourteen who were already employed should be submitted to transitional regulations; (3) that the law admitting children under twelve to some light work should be repealed.

There was also a very important reservation in regard to the enforcement of the eight-hour-day article. Here, too, Japan accepted in principle the eight-hour system. All these reservations spoke clearly to those who have ears to hear, in this wise: "Please, you men of the West, don't hustle us too much. We agree entirely with you. We are as much concerned with our working countrymen as you are with yours. We have the same tender feeling for them: but we have many obstacles in our present system which you do not possess. Give us a little more time, and then, after adjusting the various conditions, we shall comply in actual deed with every good principle you enunciate."

Now, ten years have passed since the Washington

Convention—and what can Japan show to the world in her social legislation?

As we have seen, the years 1919-22 were a red-letter period in the history of our labour. They were marked by signs of the birth of new consciousness on the part of our working classes. Strikes were frequent, some of them terminating in open hostilities against the authorities. The Soviet régime in Russia was presented in glowing colours among the population. Parlour socialists talked and theoretical agitators preached, on the near approach of the golden day for the socially oppressed. As to the Government, with all its best intentions it could not keep pace with the aspirations of the theorists or with the really-felt demands of the labourites. In the meantime, the proverbial "laws' delay" enraged the labourites. We had thus, for several successive years, the curious spectacle of the Labour delegates from Japan attacking their own Government in the forum of the International Labour Conference. How much this act of "washing dirty linen" in public enlisted the sympathies of the Labour parties of other countries it is hard to tell.

In the meantime, Labour learned much from Europe, and at home. It learned that Moscow is not Eden. It learned that its British confrère is no red revolutionary. It learned how the great strike of 1919 was conducted in London without violence.

At home there were two influences, particularly strong, throwing a wet blanket on the Radical movements. One was the economic panic of 1920, bringing unemployment in its train. Trade depression has continued ever since. Then came the earthquake in 1923. These events toned down even the clamour of agitators. The other was the sedate and moderate counsel given by the more thoughtful

Labour leaders. Let it be noted here that some of the most influential among them are Christians—and it means more to be a Christian in Japan than it does in Europe, where everybody is considered as one unless he affirms the contrary. In the midst of a non-Christian community, it takes a man of character to profess a new religion. With that racial quickness to perceive what is right and wrong, good and bad, wise and foolish, the labourites have calmed down, at least have given up resort to violence.

The Government, in the meantime, true to the Washington Convention, has proceeded, by open legislation and by giving advice and warning to employers, with the task of improving labour conditions. Labour Union Bills were presented in the Diet many times. They were either too advanced for Conservatives or too conservative for Radicals. It has established by the end of 1930 no less than 190 employment exchange bureaux throughout the country. The night work for women and children (under sixteen) has been abolished. Factory inspectors, both local and central, have been increased to 200. In spite of the great distance, and consequently of the great expense involved, we send a large number of delegates to both the League of Nations and the Labour Conference year after year. This is an annual pilgrimage, and is in accordance with a proverb, "If you love your child, send him out on a journey." Lafcadio Hearn has described, in his inimitable style, the mobility of the Japanese. Japan is also one of the very few countries which have in Geneva a permanent office of Government delegates, accredited to the Labour Bureau.

In a speech before a Labour Conference at Geneva, Mr. Mayeda rightly stated that Japan has done for

labour in the last decade what it has taken Europe a century to do. This is no mere boasting. Whoever runs can read its truth. Yet she is perfectly well aware that she has not done everything. There remains the eight-hour problem, like a thorn in the flesh. Accustomed to long hours of work, our people do not mind them as much as the operatives in the West; but that is no excuse for keeping them from a more profitable use of their time. What profitable use? Social and educational provisions must be made, or else idle hours are like pretty flowers that bear no fruit. Factories also must be enlarged to accommodate the increased machinery and labour which shorter hours will necessitate. Employers must be given due time to adjust their staff and ledgers for the impending change. Eight-hour days will come; they must. They would have come sooner were it not for the disastrous earthquake of 1923. But neither the earthquake nor the hurricane, neither the deluge nor the fire, will deter the people from living up to their plighted word. Only, when they do come, the change must bring no hardship to the employers or the employed. A law has been passed limiting working hours to ten. This will continue in force for a few years, and then another step forward will be taken.

In 1919, the country was still unprepared to agree without reservation to all the terms of the proposed International Labour Conventions. If the Labour Conference had pressed upon Japan the unconditional acceptance of the Conventions, there would have been but one course for her to take, and that would have been to decline to adopt them, even if she had had to become an Ishmael. But the Labour Charter wisely provides exceptions, and does not impose uniformity upon all nations. Its ultimate

object is universal peace, which "can be established only if it is based on social justice"; but, in securing justice, it does not forget to "have due regard to those countries in which climatic conditions, the imperfect development of industrial organization or other special circumstances make the industrial conditions substantially different."

According to this provision, Japan was recognized as a special country, in so far as hours of work, the night work of young persons and women, and the minimum age in industry are concerned. Naturally, Japanese delegates who represented Labour in this Conference protested vigorously against a discrimination which was to them as pernicious as it was humiliating to the nation at large.

The protests and resentment of the workers were not futile, having given rise in due course to several Acts and Regulations for the betterment of labour conditions.

A cursory glance at our past attempts at labour legislation will show with what care it was framed and by what steps it has progressed. Imperfect and incomplete as it still is in many respects, we observe in its development a revolutionary speed in the last ten years; and the urge has primarily come directly or indirectly from without the country.

In the second decade of the Meiji era (*i.e.* in the eighties of last century), labour legislation was vaguely spoken about—not for any urgent reason, but as something that a civilized society ought to consider. The first draft of factory laws was drawn up in 1882. This was followed from time to time by others progressively complete, but none the less in harmony with actual conditions. Meanwhile, as the mills grew in number and size, the necessity for



some protection to labour did begin to be recognized, and, after a careful study of factory conditions, a law was drafted by the Government in 1909. This was strongly opposed by textile manufacturers—chiefly on account of the prohibition of night work. But two years later practically the same Bill, with some modifications and with the clause regarding night work expunged, passed the Diet. The twenty-five articles it contained stated some of the fundamental principles of factory legislation. In order to put them into execution, five more years had to pass, during which detailed regulations had to be prepared and inspectors trained. The officers of the factories had also to be instructed in the spirit and method of the novel legislation. Its imperfections were evident, in that it did not touch upon night work for women, which was the most serious of the evils to be combatted. Another imperfection lay in having fixed the minimum age at twelve—two years before most children finish their schooling. Children over ten years of age were allowed to work at match-making. No less barbarous was the number of working hours, which were fixed at twelve, with a special provision that the time might be prolonged by two hours for the weaving of silk destined for export—a curious instance of blood-sucking for avowed patriotism!

It must be said, however, in exoneration of the factory owners, that they did everything they could to ameliorate the conditions of living and of labour, which the laws did not always prescribe. Their motive in so doing was not unmixed charity or justice. They could not keep operatives, especially girls, in silk and cotton mills, unless they provided attractive inducements in the way of food or shelter or amusement—so keen was the competition among

factories to get an efficient and sufficient amount of labour.

The imperfections of the Factory Law were made more and more evident during the Great War, when the labourers, as has been elsewhere mentioned, became conscious of their power, and when the demand for them grew very pressing. The result was the changes in the Factory Act which were made in 1923.

The Factory Law in its amended form "lays down certain restrictions of employment, the duty of granting relief and benefit to persons injured or becoming sick in the course of their work, and provisions concerning safety sanitation." The law applies to all factories which regularly employ ten or more persons, or even to smaller factories when these are engaged in dangerous or unhealthy processes.

The working hours for children under sixteen years of age and for women are legally limited to eleven, though the actual number of hours is ten. The law prohibiting night-work for women came into force in July 1929, after long hesitation. The delay gave ample opportunity for mill-owners to prepare themselves for the change. Experience shows no unhappy results in any quarter; the girls gained and the mill-owners lost nothing. Women and children are not allowed to work in dangerous or unhealthy occupations. Women are protected, also, before and after child-birth.

For those who work in the mines, a Mining Act restricts the length of time for underground work to nine hours, and prohibits underground labour for children under sixteen years of age and for women. For coal-sorting, women may be employed, but only in the day-time.

Among the institutions for the advancement of the welfare of the working classes may be noted the Health Insurance Act—which is operated on a national scale. It aims at giving medical treatment to workers in factories and mines, the expenses being borne by the workers, the employers and the Government, in definite proportions.

In 1924 there was put into successful operation the Arbitration of Tenancy Disputes Act, and two years later was promulgated a similar Act applying to labour disputes.

Among several other laws and institutions aiming at the betterment of the socially unfavoured classes, are a system of simple life-insurance through the Post Office, public pawnshops and free employment agencies, and, besides, a number of relief and charitable undertakings.

On the whole, we may say that, though the interests of labour and the rights of the working classes have not yet received the attention they deserve, the laws and the actual work of relief and alleviation show clear evidence of the direction in which the country is moving.

## CHAPTER VII

# THE THOUGHT LIFE OF THE JAPANESE PEOPLE

“ It is as difficult to appropriate the thoughts of others as to invent.”—EMERSON.

### I. ARE THE JAPANESE A RELIGIOUS PEOPLE?

“ ARE the Japanese a religious people? ” is a question asked by every tourist who lands in this country and by every author who writes on the character of our people. The answers differ, half being in the negative and half in the affirmative, as would most likely be the case were the same query made in America or in England. Those who look at cathedrals and churches, be it in London or New York, would give a different reply from those who go into these buildings and count the small number of the worshippers. And those who go a little deeper—namely, into the hearts of the few worshippers—will again probably modify their opinion. How far a certain race is religious is a question the answer to which depends on the definition one gives to religion. If it means no more than a cult, a system or an institution—State or social—a reply can be readily and exactly given in figures. Some statisticians may prefer to use for a comparison of this kind dollars and cents permanently invested in the buildings or weekly collected in contribution boxes.

Japan's religiosity, in the sense of religion as an

institution, can be gauged by the statistics of Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples, or by the millions whose names are inscribed in the register of different monasteries, according to the old law which required every man, woman and child to be affiliated with some Buddhist sect, and whoever was not so registered was charged with the heresy of *Kirishitan* (Christian). It is obvious that statistics of temples and of nominal adherents are no reliable index of religious sincerity, and without sincerity there can be no religion rightly so called.

In a recent essay of Professor J. S. Huxley's, he says that the belief in superhuman beings is not an essential or integral part of the religious way of life; but he makes reverence the exclusive criterion of faith. Such a definition of religion approaches the popular notion in this country—that even the head of a sardine is good enough and sufficiently efficacious as a deity if it is believed in with due sincerity and reverence. As far as the Japanese are concerned, they do not suffer from the lack of objects to worship. The 800 myriad divinities that fill the pantheon of the Yamato race include every single object in Nature and every article of man's handiwork.

But whence this astounding polytheism? And whence this multiple reverence? The sentiment commonly designated reverence is more than a merely subjective attitude to the outside world. It implies fear, dread, awe—as well as faith and trust in things and men other than self. Especially true is this of a people as extrovertive as the Japanese. They are extremely sensitive to their environment, natural or human. Their herd instinct is so highly developed that their individuality is absorbed in the things around them. Their sympathies go forth to

such a degree as to impart their own life to their immediate surroundings. A Shinto priest was once asked how he could seriously elevate a sword, a mirror, a piece of stone, an old cap or the like, to a position of godhead. Said he, "Anything that has served a man's use, especially when he treasured or liked it, partakes of his spirit; for love is life and power." We use an implement or other object, and our virtue goes out into it while its virtue steals into us unawares.

The constraint and mutual inflow of power and life should form the basis of all religions. Emperor Meiji defined faith as the communion of man's spirit with that of the Invisible God. Religion may indeed be defined in the words of Evelyn Underhill as "man's response to the call of Supernatural Reality." In the impersonal mentality of the Japanese, the flowing in and the flowing out of spiritual force are not always distinguished. He may feel, but he does not analyse. To him the divine and the human are one in character and quality. Only, the latter is temporary, the former enduring. The everlasting divinity is called human during the time it resides on this planet. The instant it is liberated from its ephemeral tenement of flesh it is divine again. *Kan-nagara* is a term difficult of translation, *kan* from *kami*, and *nagara*, as it is. Perhaps the translation "man himself divine" may convey some idea of the indigenous belief. Possessed of "the seed," to borrow from George Fox's phraseology, the soul, when it places itself in the right surroundings, germinates, grows and thrives. Did we grow to the same stature as George Fox? Decidedly not; and for the reason that we are extroverts by nature, and looking outward too much for the revelation of the Kami, get entangled in the company of the 800

myriad gods. Thus, what was primarily meant for a pantheon was turned into a henotheistic labyrinth.

Nevertheless, it must be admitted that we have started upon the right track in search of spiritual reality—whatever that may be. We look for higher beings, for life beyond, for clean and undefiled living below. How much more should we ask of religion as usually understood? And if our people have not a higher conception of religious faith, who have?

Deep down in the inner region of our being, known among psychologists as the primary consciousness, lurk the energies of mind which may be called fundamental instincts. They are so closely intertwined one with another that when one is aroused the others rise to antagonize or to co-operate. Of such primary powers of mind are our mental reaction to external Nature, our perception of beauty, our wonder and awe. All these combine to feed that mysterious psychic activity known as faith. Religion is not the movement of the soul on a single track. It is a complex of diverse elements, as is seen in the likeness, if not the identity, of the emotions and sentiments which it evokes with those produced by art. "Holiness" and "beauty" spring from a common source. In the diversion and sublimation of *libido* how often religion and æsthetics play the same rôle! Art has from time immemorial been called the handmaid of religion. Despite the iconoclasticism of ascetics, an artistic and a religious temperament are closely interwoven at the root. Clutton-Brock has defined religion as "an apprehension gained less by metaphysical reflection than by æsthetic intuition, of Divine Personality as the clue to the creative processes of the Universe and the living upholder of a live world." Even if this definition be incomplete, it is true as far as it goes,

and we must admit that a people of strongly developed artistic temperament is religious in a sense little suspected by peoples of a different temperament.

## 2. SHINTO, THE ORIGINAL FAITH OF THE JAPANESE

Though the race is endowed with a deep sense of reverence, the Japanese have no genius for dogmatization—that is, for putting into a system the vague yearnings and experiences of communion with the unseen Power immanent in the universe. Shinto is an embodiment of their jejune aspirations. They enjoy the pulsations of Nature and Nature's mysterious vitality, but they have never formulated their observations into a credo. They crave for the Absolute, and satisfy their craving by a crude animistic or animatistic worship. Their idea of sin is physical uncleanness. Their first and last desire is to get rid of pollution, and if by thus seeking purity other things shall be added unto them, well and good. Life eternal is not the goal of their ambition: earthly existence is quite sufficient for gods. Their life is almost vegetal. Truth and righteousness are qualities of the cleanness of spirit to be secured by lustration. The vocabulary of Shinto is extremely limited, showing paucity of ideas. Be ye pure—pure, not “as your Father which is in heaven,” of whom they know nothing, but as ye are in the essence of your own being. This pure being is that which remains when one is purged of all foreign dross, of all ill-will against one's neighbour, of all inordinate desire, of all that casts the least shadow over serenity of soul.

As all natural instincts are an integral part and parcel of one's being, they are no impediments to a god-like life, hence no asceticism. Shinto is unmoral. Its very gods were perhaps like the *numina*



of the Romans. To be god-like constrains no abstemious life. The gods do not deny themselves. Only they never indulge in excesses. *Kan-nagara*, the condition of godhead, is the normal wholesome state of natural existence—an Edenic existence after the heart of Jean Jacques Rousseau. But, like other paradises, this one, too, is hedged about by many inhibitions and prohibitions, leaving little freedom to uphold its incorruptibility. Exorcism, ablution, prayers, incantations—taboos of all sorts—have been invented to mar the simple, original ways of the gods and godlings. In order to be natural, an artificial requirement is called upon for aid, and in order to be very natural, Shinto has become extremely ritualistic. The State does not consider its many rites and ceremonies as religious functions. The obeisance required in shrines is not regarded as an act of worship. Shinto is scarcely worth the epithet “religion.” It is a cult. It is a cult with few moral precepts and fewer theological tenets. But as a form of “Nature worship,” complemented by reverence for the memory of the dead, it is still a living power. As a repository of venerable traditions and the highest interpreter of primitive legends, it is a stronghold of conservatism. It is not a State religion, though it is pre-eminently the cult of the Royal House. The connection between Shinto and the Court is so intimate that in their origin they were one. The word government (*matsuri-goto*) meant the affairs pertaining to worship; for the Emperor was the Pontifex Maximus. The term *miya* applies to a shrine and to the Royal Court, though never to an ordinary house. Only in the reign of the tenth Emperor, Sujin (564–631), was the residence of a sovereign differentiated from the shrine of his divine forebears. We may date from

this time the separation of Religion and Government, Church and State.

Going out of the Court, Shinto has come nearer to the people. It has become an emotional extension of the imperial authority, a powerful arm to attach the people to the Crown, reaching where law and force could not.

Shinto is a sentiment without philosophy or theology. Its literature, consisting of a few liturgies, is devoid of deep thought or lofty imagination. Its worship is formal. How could it cope with Buddhism when this was introduced into the country? Some show of opposition was made, on the usual ground that Buddhism was an alien faith. The primary reason for opposing an exotic idea is usually because it is novel and distasteful. But Shinto had a more rational objection to make. The Buddhist doctrine of Equality would upset the very fabric of society, which was based on the *uji* system.

It was a curious coincidence that this religious novelty reached Japan—or rather the Royal Court—at the time when the *uji* system was proving a menace to the Court itself. That discriminating acumen which the nation shows in times of crisis was very much in evidence when the Sogas advocated the adoption of the new faith and were overthrown, not because of their faith, but because of their political ambition. As to Buddhism itself, it survived the fiasco of its protagonist. It allayed the fears of its Shinto opponents by its superior intellectual equipment, and overcame their nationalistic scruples by amalgamating the two faiths under the doctrine of *Ryōbu* (Duality). According to this doctrine, Shinto deities are the earthly manifestations, the avatars, of Buddhas, whose originals are in heaven. The Sun-Goddess is only an incarna-

tion of Mahavairocana. All the 800 myriads of the Shinto pantheon can be proved to be the counterparts, or rather the Japanese renderings, of the Buddhist divinities. Very soon after, the tables were turned. The Japanese religionists, by resorting to the logical process of obversion and conversion, could, with equal plausibility, argue that the Shinto Kami are the originals of the Indian gods. This ingenious amalgamation infused an intellectual element into the native religion, raising it to a more rational and ethical level. Shinto began to interpret itself in terms of Buddhism. The simple articles of its faith were now elevated to a creed. The materialistic beliefs were imbued with moral precepts. Even the phallic gods themselves were clothed in the grandiloquent attributes of a high spiritual order.

But the *Ryōbu* was a morganatic connection, to be dissolved sooner or later. Under this device Shinto, like a hen-pecked husband, was led by the nose, kept alive to take no active part in the real concerns of life. For many centuries it lay dormant. The revival of Shinto was due to the studies of ancient national history, undertaken from the middle of the eighteenth century, and still going on. We have already seen how vigorously ethnical the Shinto teachings are. Any study and propaganda of Shinto can have but one result—the adoration of the country and of its Ruler, patriotism and Mikadolatry. The Imperial Restoration of 1868 is due in no small measure to the rehabilitation of Shinto. Hence, in the organization of the early Meiji Government, the Department of Divine Rites (*Jingi*) was placed above all administrative and legislative offices. *Ryōbu* was disestablished, and the gods made independent of Buddha. All the quasi-religious functions on State occasions were henceforth to be performed in accord-

ance with Shinto usages. Back to primitive institutions the nation was to be guided. The Shinto shrines, graded in the order of their historical or local importance, were taken under Government patronage. Scattered about throughout the whole country are some 114,000 shrines of various sizes and ranks. Every village and hamlet has one. Every family has its little altar, the shelf of gods (*Kami-dana*), where are kept memorial tablets for its dead and emblems of its Lares and Penates. This is a voluntary act, not the least influence being exercised by the authorities in matters of faith. The Imperial Constitution guarantees entire freedom of conscience. It has been officially declared that "Shinto is not a religion, but solely a veneration of the Imperial forebears, and an observance of festivities and rites in memory of the nation's heroes." Shinto is therefore treated in two-fold ways—as a State cult or as a form of popular worship—and only in the latter classification is it considered a religion. Official statistics give the number of adherents as over 16,000,000. This means little. The number was arrived at by a process of elimination. Those who do not profess Buddhism or Christianity are put in this group, as being the indigenous and natural faith for the Japanese to follow. The number includes a vast host of men and women who do not believe anything.

The decade following the Restoration was the halcyon time for Shinto. The nationalistic motive and the declaration of return to ancient ways necessarily brought it to the fore. Even a half-hearted attempt was made at proselytizing. It was well that the attempt was only half-hearted, otherwise persecution or at least religious disabilities would have been the result. "Messengers of Religion"

were officially appointed to go out to preach the Way of the gods, which in 1872 was condensed into the following three points :

- (1) To practise the principle of love of country and reverence for the gods ;
- (2) To make clear the reason of heaven and the way of man ;
- (3) To accept gratefully the rule of His Majesty and to obey his will.

In order to spread this creed, there were appointed in 1875 no less than 7247 Government preachers, many of whom possessed no moral or intellectual qualification whatever for the task, and in a short time made themselves the butt of merriment to the populace. By the beginning of 1877 the experiment came to an end, leaving the well-learned lesson that official missionary work is impotent in the domain of spirit, and, what is still more important, that the people had outgrown a primitive religion.

The study of Shinto continues, both on account of its historic value and archæological interest, and of its moral and sociological aspects as well. Its very barrenness of dogmas is attractive to some of its votaries, who would fill the void with their own conceptions of what Japanese religion should be or might have been. While some scholars are engaged in making of Shinto a national code of beliefs, there are others who would make of it a social institution to serve the demands not filled by other organizations. It has instituted a funeral service—a practice surely abhorrent to the *Kami*, who, like the gods of ancient Greece, would have nothing to do with so polluting a thing as death. It has still more recently inaugurated a wedding ceremony, a subject much more

congenial to its traditions, and consistent with the need of modern Japan, where the old marriage custom has fallen into desuetude. With these new activities started, and a few educational and welfare enterprises under way, Shinto will be brought nearer to the people. A social phenomenon worthy of attention is the rise of new Shinto sects numbering thousands of followers—such as Tenrikyô, inaugurated by an unlettered woman, and Kongokyô, begun by an ignorant carpenter, and others less known but kept up by fanatical adherents. They are all extremely simple and unsophisticated in their creeds.

It will be as instructive to watch how the attempt to instil new life into Shinto, by giving a modern interpretation to its myths and legends, will succeed as to study a similar movement started in India under the name of Arya Somaj, which bases itself on the Vedas and claims for itself the doubtful virtues of patriotism. A religion that appeals to patriotism defeats its own purpose. It condescends thereby to be a friend of Cæsar, sharing with him the dominion of the earth. Certainly God does not covet earthly possessions. If Shinto aligns itself with principalities and powers, as it is wont to do—let it stay out of the market-place or out of an academic forum.

Archæology and linguistics will rob Shinto of its old-time sanctity; but they will also purge it of incoherent myths and inchoate narratives. It must not look to fanaticism for its conquest, nor to superstition for its continuance. It must stand on real merit, if it is to win a place among the religions of the world.

The essence of Shinto as a system of worship seems to reduce itself in the last analysis to magic, since it is usually understood as meaning the art of

producing physical results by spiritual power. Such an art may consist of various acts of divination—exorcism, incantation, conjuration, thaumaturgy, etc.—all of which can be so ordered as to form a cult. The exercise of such a supernatural power, directly by a magician or indirectly through him by an unseen being, presupposes a belief in the existence of a close relationship between physical and spiritual existences. This is animism in a crude form, and gives rise to worship, and from this to Nature- and ancestor-worship; thence to polytheism and pantheism there is no wide space to traverse.

Shinto, in its primitive stage, may well have been allied with Shamanism. Is it possible that the Japanese race brought it from their original home, Akkad? From the descriptions given by Vambéry, Radloff, Nioradze, Czaplica, one detects only faint resemblances between them; but from its cult and practices in ancient days, of which we get detached glimpses in the *Kojiki*, one is tempted to regard Shinto as related—setting aside the question how innately or how distantly—with Shamanism as this is now to be met with in the north-eastern regions of the Asiatic continent. A good Japanese may be given an uncanny shock by being told of the widespread Turkish term *Kam* among Tungu Shamans, which term is applied to the intermediary between spirits and men, and which Vambéry translates as *doctor, quack salver, medicator or sorcerer*.

If Shinto were really an offshoot of Shamanism, it must be said, to the credit of our race, that the child has outstripped the parent faith by an immeasurably long stretch of idealism and refinement of manners. The continental cult is still in an exceedingly primitive stage of mental development;

and if Shinto, also, is not highly advanced, it has at least got rid of grossness—both in its articles of faith and in its rites and ceremonies. This fact may be due to the usual propensity of the Japanese so to stamp any public observances, be they religious, social or political, with the authority of the Court and the State, as to render them immaculate and free of gaucherie or ribaldry. Once consigned to the Court, immobility characterizes the rites, which become rituals, and thus are preserved ancient forms of worship in pristine *naïveté* and chastity.

There seems little doubt that magic, in the broad scientific sense of the term, originally played the chief part in Shinto. Sympathetic or, as Frazer calls it, Contagious Magic explains the existence of so many fetishes enshrined in our innumerable fanes, large and small, and of so many holy places hedged round about with taboo. Talismans and amulets endowed with magical powers are furnished to the public in all the shrines of the country. Homeopathic magic explains the many rituals which form the bulk of the cult. So numerous are the rituals that one sees nothing else in Shinto sacraments. Purification is exorcism. Atonement is offering of sacrifice. The predominance of the magic element leads us to acknowledge that there may be a close connection between Shinto and Shamanism. If the truth and sanctity of magic be admitted there will follow practices that may be found common to all the cults founded on it, irrespective of locality. So there are not a few analogous views and doctrines in Shinto and Druidism, separated as they are in time and space. One may even detect in their tree-worship a close relationship. Shinto, as we understand it at present, is probably a composite product of many faiths held by many tribes and



racess who were ultimately amalgamated into the Yamato people.

There seems to be one feature which is common to all faiths of magical derivation, and that is the comparatively nonchalant attitude towards ethics. They do not interfere with—they evidently do not care for—the inner life or the private conduct of their followers. From the simple fact that their influence is exerted through rituals—that is, through established rites—which hierologists would call communal magic, it is only to be inferred that the neglect of set forms would be considered the greatest offence. Rituals demand from the public a certain line of behaviour—be it only silent acquiescence. The outward conformation is all that is required of it. Its inner motive is left entirely untouched. No inquisition. No confession of faith. The religious duties are concerned not so much with man's relation with gods or men as with ritualistic forms. Any violation of these is therefore taken as an offence against society and the State. To make a disparaging remark about the sanctity of rituals is no mere heresy ; it is treason. Hence, the intolerance and bigotry of a State religion are notorious.

The more advanced of the Shinto adherents give a moral interpretation to the legends and rites, and attempt to elevate the ancient faith to a higher and rational level. Reverence is transferred from a material object to the power which it is said to represent. Indeed, an object which was once believed to possess a certain power is said merely to represent it. From being a thing itself, it becomes a symbol. Phallicism is the appreciation of productivity ; lustration, of spiritual purity ; sacrifice, of sin-offering. Myths are interpreted as symbols. The non-moral faith is thus easily imbued with

ethical teachings, and even the immoral stories related of the deities can be modified so as to be properly attuned to the cultivated sentiments and taste of the age.

Shinto, as a system of belief, will scarcely be able to keep pace with the development of modern science. Many of its creeds, if they deserve the name, will be proved barren of rhyme and reason. Philosophically and scientifically, historically and ethically, Shinto will not be able to stand comparison with any imported faith—Buddhism or Christianity. Its strength and its very life are due to its ethnic, strictly national and nationalistic, character. In one form or another it will survive intellectual revolutions of the nation to which it is native, because it is supported not by intellect, but by emotion, as is best evidenced by the patriotism and loyalty which it has inculcated above all other virtues. Shinto may be summed up as the *ensemble* of the emotional elements of the Japanese race.

Will it, then, contribute nothing to the world? Has it no message outside Japan? There is a teaching which, if not confined to Shinto, is at least most emphasized by it, and that is the innate goodness of human nature. Chinese philosophers were long arrayed in two opposing camps on this question, and a third party later developed to enliven the dispute. One school maintained that man is good by nature; another, that he is bad; while the third contended that he is a mixture of good and bad. Shintoists did not come under Chinese influence in this matter. Though they had an idea of good (*nigimi-tama*) and bad (*arami-tama*) spirits, they consistently upheld the theanthropic doctrine of *Kan-nagara*, of man being essentially divine. No doctrine of the fall of man has ever perplexed them.

They have ever insisted upon the purity of the human heart (*ma-gokoro*), by which they mean freedom from inordinate passions. Shinto is not abstemious, puritanic. It puts no restraint on food or drink, raiment or dwelling, except that these be simple and clean. It provides a wide space for the play of the *libidos*. All appetites are natural, and hence divine gifts, and the temperate enjoyment of them is a divine power. If in the satisfaction of his desires man oversteps the limits of moderation, he pollutes his body and mind. To be god-like is to be natural; to be natural is to follow Nature as Nature will have itself followed, which is within the limits set by reason and instinct.

It is this fundamental, subconscious conception of "Due Measure" which I believe is at the root of the resemblances which have so often struck European scholars as existing between Japan and Ancient Greece. For is not *Sophrosyne* the precept not only of *Œdipus Tyrannus*, as its translator, Mr. Sheppard, seems to suggest, but of the whole Greek religion? The two inscriptions on the Delphic temple—"Nothing too much," and "Know thyself"—were complementary. If you have too much of anything, you cannot know yourself. If you would know yourself, you must not have too much of anything. The moral equipoise—the Golden Mean—is the attainment of godhead. Freedom and restraint, the "Do" and the "Don't" in the moral world, act like the centrifugal and centripetal forces in the physical to keep an even balance. The Greeks indulged in an exercise of freedom, and reaped from it intellectual fruits of the first order—but, indulging in excess, they collapsed as a community, and as a political entity, in a couple of centuries. The Japanese have erred in an excess of restraint. No people are more

reticent and reserved. They have failed to duplicate Plato and Sophocles, Aristotle and Euripides, but have kept up the integrity and unity of the nation and achieved its homogeneity. If there is a wide gap between the ancient Greeks and the modern Japanese intellectually, they are emotionally very closely bound together. Naturalness, youthful buoyancy, unabated curiosity, characterize them both. Classicists may profitably look a little deeper into the apparent void of Shinto faith, where they may find a new clue for unravelling the tangled skeins of the ancient religions of Greece and Rome.

Human consciousness has three gradations or levels. The first and lowest is that of the external world; the second is that of mental operations, of the thought-world, and the last and highest is of the spiritual plane. Shinto begins with the first stage, where it feels immediacy with the cosmos in its material aspect. Here it leads a life unitive with the natural senses. It has scarcely passed through the second stage, but, viewed from the standpoint of the third, its naïve myths and legends can be symbolically so construed in metaphysical and metaphorical terms as to convey abiding values. Any attempt to make of it a matter of faith will prove far-fetched and ineffectual, for, though it started aright, it has never come anywhere near attaining cosmic consciousness and unitive life with the eternal reality, to get at which is the goal of all religious strivings. Shinto has the power to give contentment to a good patriot or a faithful subject. It can never satisfy the obstinate questionings of a human soul. It will therefore be preserved as a custom of Court ceremonies and national rites; but as a religious tenet it must give way to Buddhism and Christianity.

It is to be noted in the history of Japan that whenever great and radical changes were effected in its political constitution or social customs, a strong protest for or against them proceeded from the parties that spoke for national tradition. The most uncompromising opposition came from the Shintoists.

When Buddhist scriptures and statues were formally presented to the Emperor's Court in 552, the strongest objection raised against accepting them was that Japan had its own Kami, powerful enough to protect it in case of war and beneficent enough to preserve it in times of peace. Though Buddhism won the day, and went on winning—due no doubt to its intrinsic excellence in doctrines, tenets and arts—it could never, even in its halcyon days of triumph, vanquish Shinto. Compare this fact with the fatal blow dealt by Christianity to Druidism in Gaul and Britain. Shinto, in the earlier days, was probably not much superior to Druidism as a system of belief, nor were the mediæval Christian missions much superior to the Japanese Buddhist orders of the Nara or Heian periods. What was it, then, that kept Shinto alive, however feebly, whereas Druidism was annihilated, leaving a few fragments of its bones in folklore and local customs? Stonehenge stands grimly, only to show that its makers are gone, giving no hope of their return. It was perhaps the intolerance of the Church—or call it the zeal and ardour of missionaries, if that sounds better!—in its attitude to the worshippers of the oak that was the cause of their extinction. The henotic character of Buddhism, on the contrary, tried to absorb Shinto in its all-embracing system of a universal religion. For a time, indeed, the faith of the Kami was swallowed up, its individuality

quite obscured. At times it hardly breathed. But die, it never did. At its lowest stage, it hibernated, and woke to activity in a time of national crisis. Hence in the Taika period, in spite of the dominant influence exercised by Buddhism, Shinto ideas were very much to the fore. Hence, too, in the Meiji Restoration, which in no small degree owes its very inception to the revival of Shinto literature. It was its votaries that kept the Meiji reformers from plunging into excessive xenomania.

Now again we are confronted with grave national problems. The country stands at the cross-roads. People talk of the "Second *Ishin*" (Restoration). The air is vibrating with vague forebodings that presage vast changes. Ideas contrary to our national traditions and subversive of our State-life are being imported from abroad. It is no mere coincidence that of late there has been awakened the keenest interest in archæological research and the study of ancient lore. Books embodying investigation of prehistoric Japan, ponderous volumes of annotations of the *Kojiki* and the *Manyōshū*, popular expositions of anthropology, studies of religions and ethnographies of neighbouring peoples—notably of Siberian and Mongolian tribes—all attest the fact that our thoughts are bent in somewhat the same direction as that towards which our fathers turned their attention; that we, too, may put our house in better order and place the throne of our Ruler on a still firmer foundation—and so keep intact the traditions of the race, in face of the destructive assaults of alien ideas.

Religious professions, and Shinto foremost of all, begin as an emotion and later become a sentiment. They then grow more rationalistic, traditional or historical, and only in these latter days have they

become scientific. Shinto studies were in the beginning hardly deserving of the name, for they were not exactly studies. People accepted what was told them by priests. Their hearts were stirred to enthusiasm or subdued to reverence and awe. In the eighteenth century the "Way of the Gods" became an object of study philosophically and rationally, but it was still highly tinged with emotion. Now it is being compared with other systems of faith. Its rites and ceremonies are explained in terms of anthropology and archæology. Its orisons and incantations are translated into modern language and explained psychologically. Its rituals are a subject for philologists and sociologists. Calmly and objectively Shinto is dissected for analysis.

The essence of Shinto cannot be condensed into just so many articles of faith. It is not a dogma. It is not even a religion or a *Weltanschauung*. It is the *ensemble* of all the emotional experiences of the Yamato race, a human document of a long-lived nation. To study it scientifically is to bring into consciousness feelings long buried in the obscure regions of the subconscious, and to give expression to those inarticulate sentiments that have for generations been accumulating in the heart of the race.

The rise of popular and scientific study of our ancient faith is to be welcomed—first, as indicating the dawn of a new era in Japanese science, secondly, as encouraging an impartial method of presenting our ancestral conception of life, and, thirdly, as a contribution to the knowledge of the world on a theme hitherto regarded as dark and bizarre.

### 3. BUDDHISM AND ITS SECTS

Buddhism in Japan has for centuries accumulated a history of its own, besides contributing profusely

to that of the country. There is scarcely a phase of the nation's progress which does not show the profound effect of this faith. Many industries, arts and crafts owe their origin to ecclesiastical foundations. Of the charities under their auspices we have already spoken. Most of the amenities of life were of their introduction. The very temperament of the people has been affected by this faith. Warriors have been emboldened and mellowed by it. Peasants have been comforted and uplifted by it. Womanhood has been sweetened and purified by it. If, at times, ambitious priests and unscrupulous establishments tarnished their sacred profession, let it be remembered that, without this faith, Japanese history would have been the "simple annals" of a humble folk.

When Buddhism was introduced from Korea in the Nara Period, it was represented by a number of the Hihayana sects belonging to the Southern School of Buddhism. They were soon followed by the highly idealistic sects, Kegon and Tendai of the Northern or the Mahayana School. Then was introduced the Shingon sect, with its pantheism, occultism and baptismal rite. Several centuries later—namely, in the twelfth—were introduced two very powerful sects, Zen and Jôdô—again from China. As most of these sects have sub-divisions, we can see that the country must have provided a fertile soil for religious theories and dissensions long before she proved herself as such when Christianity was first preached in the sixteenth, and when Protestantism was introduced in the nineteenth century. Buddhism, as it was presented by the Tendai, had been strongly influenced by Chinese philosophy, and when it was brought to Japan by a native priest, Dengyô, it was susceptible of broad interpretation.



At the hand of this ingenuous intrepere, its teachings were made to tally with those of the Shinto belief, giving rise to *Ryōbu*, of which mention has already been made.

The esoteric Shingon sect, of Indian origin, was introduced by Kobo. Believing in universal Buddha and communion with the Absolute, Kobo found no difficulty in regarding the Kami as manifestations of the absolute and universal beings which had already shown themselves in Indian shapes. He aided greatly in confirming the idea of *Ryōbu*.

The popularity of Shingon and Tendai was largely due to the amalgamation of Buddhist and Shinto beliefs. Even after the connection was dissolved in the early Meiji reform, they could claim a vigorous following. The Shingon has the largest number of votaries—over 16,000,000—while the Tendai has over 2,000,000. But neither of these sects is the most influential as regards number or quality of adherents.

The Zen (*Dhyana*) teaching, called the religion of the Samurai, often compared with Quakerism, is the latest importation from China. It has found most favour among the educated classes. Though numerically it has not more than 8,000,000 or 9,000,000 adherents, it includes perhaps a larger number of intelligentsia than any other religious profession. No sect of Buddhism emphasizes the value and the power of the individual so much as Zen, and it is due to this peculiarity that it counts among its followers some of the most outstanding characters of our history. The mentality of the *samurai* in the Kamakura Period was dominated by its stoical teaching and their activity directed thereby. The feudal laws of Hōjō, known as *Goseibai*, show clear evidence of the Zen influence in the stress laid on equality and individual responsibility. According

to Zen, salvation, or spiritual satisfaction, comes by the exercise of intuition prompted by contemplation. This demands a strenuous exertion of will on the part of the devotee, and contributes to the building of his character.

A very different and simple way was opened for salvation by Jôdô, literally the Pure Land sect, of Chinese origin—elaborated by St. Honen, himself one of the loftiest characters that ever graced the history of Buddhism in this country. Its pivotal tenet of salvation by faith in Amida Buddha appeals to a large number of seekers after spiritual consolation. It was further developed by St. Shinran, the Protestant, who carried out its teachings so as to include many innovations shocking to the orthodox. The most astounding of these innovations was the liberty given to its priests to marry as well as to eat meat. He also did away with images. Shinran took this step to demonstrate that salvation comes by faith, and not by work or denial. As far as numbers are concerned, the Jôdô school, inclusive of several sub-sects, surpasses others, having on its list over 16,000,000 members. Of these sub-sects the one called the Shin-shū or True Sect, founded by Shinran himself, has over 13,000,000 followers.

The Shin-shū is not the only sect originating in Japan. The *Hokké* (Lotus Flower), otherwise called the Nichiren sect, after the name of its founder, arose in the thirteenth century, a few decades after the Shin sect. Strong even to the verge of ferocity, independent to the limit of isolation, uncompromising to a degree bordering on fanaticism, Nichiren was a Protestant of Protestants. He denounced in severest language all principalities and powers of his time, and, standing firm on the Scriptures of the Lotus (*Saddharma Pundarika*), he proclaimed sal-

vation by faith in Buddha himself and Buddha alone, and not in Amida, as revealed in that holy book. His zeal quelled the ridicule of the public, and his patriotism baffled the persecution of the authorities. The nationalistic element in his teaching is no small attraction to many of his followers. Fervour still characterizes his sect, and at present, though they do not exceed 3,000,000, their activities are noticeable in every sphere of life.

The numbers that have been cited are only rough estimates, and by no means signify that membership of any of the various sects implies knowledge, much less conviction, of their creeds. We have already said that during the Tokugawa Period, when the prohibition of Christianity was most vigorously carried out, every man, woman and child was required to join some Buddhist sect, and that a refusal to do so was deemed sufficient to convict one of being inclined to the evil faith. Everyone was affiliated, with or without personal persuasion, with some Buddhist organization. In 1870, when the *Ryôbu* system was abolished, a new religious registration was re-enforced, and people reported to the authorities their affiliation to the sect by whose priests their parents were buried. A religious profession was merely a matter of hereditary concern. Present religious statistics are a continuation of this same old inquiry, and must be read as such.

Forty-five millions or so out of the total population of six hundred millions are put down as professors of the Buddhist faith, a large majority being divided among the four sects of Zen, Jôdô, Shin and Nichiren. Altogether there are 55,000 officiating priests charged with the care of some 71,500 temples of all names, sizes and qualities.

Prior to the Restoration, Buddhist priests occu-

pied a privileged position. Nobody questioned their authority in matters of the spirit; nobody pried into their lives in matters of the flesh. They led an easy existence, and often more than easy, preying upon the industry and credulity of their parishioners. Corruption among them was connived at, ignorance ignored. Their chief means of subsistence consisted in the burial of the dead. They held aloof from mundane occupations. Theirs was a life of utmost ease and security. It was a terrible blow to their complacency when, with the abrogation of the *Ryōbu*, the priests, who were domiciled in Shinto shrines, were suddenly thrown out into the world, together with their images and their paraphernalia. The Buddhist temples were turned into schools, barracks, offices, and put to other secular uses. These iconoclastic measures, instigated by the Government, were aimed directly at Buddhism and indirectly at Christianity, whose advent after the opening of the country was anticipated with no small misgiving. But the inherent light of Buddhist faith could not be easily quenched. It had the support of the masses. During a rather quiescent existence of about a score years, Buddhism survived its disestablishment, and raised its head again under the stimulus of an aggressive foreign faith. For some time it resorted to acrimony and vituperation of the evil faith, under the shield of which Western nations were supposed to devour our sacred land; but those years are fast passing away. A new generation of priests and theologians has been educated, whose study has led them to confidence in the superiority of many articles of their own faith and to reflection on some points of its weakness. They have even adopted some of the methods of Christian propaganda. There are at present many

educational institutions of learning under Buddhist management. They have Sunday schools in which to train children in the doctrines of Sakya Muni. Buddhist ladies have come out of their seclusion, and are taking an active part in the amelioration of suffering and in social reforms of every kind. Instead of quarrelling in words, they compete with Christians in good works. A wholesome rivalry between Buddhist and Christian workers seems to be the next stage in the development of religious life in this country.

#### 4. THE ETHICAL VALUE OF BUDDHISM

It is not our purpose here to discuss the doctrines of Sakya Muni. We leave that task to the numerous treatises written on them. Rather is it our aim to speak briefly of the moral effects wrought on our people by that religion. They are considerable, and we have had occasion to refer to some of them in the chapter on History. From a reservoir of thought so vast and so old, so deep and so rich, issued forth life-giving streams, flooding the plains of public life and penetrating into the tiniest crevices of individual experience. In many ways it was the life-blood of the nation. We cannot conceive of present Japan without thinking of Buddhism, any more than we can of Europe without Christianity. In speaking of the effects, we must dwell on a few salient points which were particularly fruitful of results.

Buddhism is a system of thought wider in scope than science or philosophy, more comprehensive than art or morals. The immensity of its practical influence is primarily due to the grandeur of its conception and the ingenuity of its dialectics. One of its most representative exponents has recently said, "Buddhism is not such a paltry affair as religion.

It transcends the interests of humanity, whereas religion is concerned only with man." He sees in Buddhism a combination of science and philosophy—not put together like a mechanical mixture, but organically united like a chemical compound.

Taking now only the human side of Buddhist teaching, apart from non-human aspects, its central idea is to take hold of Absolute Reality (*bhutatathata*)—in Japanese, *Shinnyo*—by the practice of virtues (*paramitas*). Dr. W. H. Solf calls Buddhism "a consensus of philosophical systems." One of the deepest students of Buddhism, Dr. Paul Dahlke, has recently put in as condensed a form as can be found anywhere the conception of life according to this religion. As he puts it, life is "*neither a metaphysical thing* (comprehensibility, matter of faith), nor a physical (comprehensibility, matter of proof), but an *a-metaphysical*, Grasping itself, a mental process which has its sufficient cause neither in the metaphysical (God), nor in the physical (other life processes, parents, etc.), but in itself." The sole object of this Grasping is what is conventionally called personality. "That this latter is *the* object of independence upon which Grasping exists, and at the same time is that which exists in dependence upon Grasping—to understand this, to realize it, to live it out, this in the deepest sense means Buddhism." <sup>1</sup>

This is perfectly rational. But there lies a long road between the exercise of moral discipline and the ultimate end of man's aspiration, for a man may be flawless in his conduct and pure in his thought, but he cannot on that account grasp *bhutatathata*. The observance of a moral code is but a step towards the stage of emancipation where we can control our

<sup>1</sup> *Buddhism and its Place in the Mental Life of Mankind.*

thought and where we can exercise wisdom. When we arrive at this stage we are very near the gate of Nirvana, that annihilation of Ego, which is a necessary preparation for winning the knowledge of the Absolute. Morality is thus considered a means, important surely enough, but not the most important, of gaining the most coveted object of human striving. Sakya Muni himself taught that we must be moral in our ideas and action, as every evil thought and deed is accompanied by an evil result. Purity of heart is essential for clearness of head. He admonished his followers to be good one to another, as they are social beings. He imposed strict self-denial, on the ground that self is non-existent, and that its denial is the most helpful method of reaching Nirvana.

Morality is usually explained as a natural outcome of social life, an evolution of herd instinct; but in so individualistic a religion as Buddhism, ethical conduct is, as Anesaki says, appraised on "an autonomic and personal principle in contrast to the legal and social basis." For a religion which denies Ego, to speak of personal development sounds self-contradictory, but Buddhism delights in paradoxes.

Most religions make good, or goodness, their chief objective, in contrast to evil or badness. Ormuzd versus Ahriman, God versus Satan, *bodhi-citta* versus *avidya*, gods versus demons! St. Paul waxes eloquent on polar ethics. But Buddhism has gone beyond ethical dualism, or relativity, and finds in its synthesis, the Absolute, neither good nor evil. Does this remind one of Hegel's doctrine of the essence of Being as consisting of Being with Non-Being? But the followers of Sakya Muni are too pragmatic utterly to disregard the conception of "pure good" in daily life. That would be as absurd

as to calculate motion on an ordinary road as though it were taking place in a vacuum.

It will perhaps clarify the attitude of Buddhism in regard to morality if I first explain the gradations in the conception of goodness. Morality may be pursued :—

(1) From an earthly selfish desire to satisfy one's gregarious instinct, or with an eye to material compensation, to profit or honour.

(2) From a more refined egoistic motive (as of the Arhat) for self-improvement, as a discipline in making oneself as "perfect as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," as a ladder to mount to a higher plane of life—say, to Nirvana.

(3) From an altruistic motive to help one's fellow-beings by social service or to share the joys which one has won (as is the case with the *bodhisattva*).

(4) From no conscious effort, but simply as a natural course, as when the bird rejoices our heart by its song or the sun warms us by its rays.

The first motive scarcely deserves the name of morality, since it lacks the primary condition of goodness, being only a spurious imitation. The second category abounds with well-meaning persons of all races and faiths, groaning under the heavy load of a moral code, denying themselves the demands of natural instincts. The third embraces a limited number of men and women who have attained a high level of enlightenment—having passed through religious conversion, or an intellectual conviction of Nirvana. They constitute a formidable portion of the army flying the banner of the God of Hosts,



crusading against the evils of the world. They are reformers, missionaries, teachers—an aggressive lot of people who go out into the highways and hedges, and compel everyone they find to come into their master's house and taste of his supper. When the Mahayana scriptures admonished those that had once entered Nirvana not to bother themselves with morality, it was to warn them against excessive zeal in good works. For those who have partaken of the privileges and delights of communion with the Absolute are delivered from the moral law, that being dead wherein they were held; that they "should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." We may study the Epistle to the Romans with a Buddhist's eye.

Nirvana has been identified by some modern psychologists with "cosmic consciousness." Those who realize it therefore look upon the universe with the eye of its Creator. They will pronounce His handiwork, including the earthquakes and storms, plagues and death, to be good and perfect. They do not condemn the world; they do not teach or preach. The world is condemned by their presence; their whole being is eloquent in lessons and sermons. Like the sun and moon, they shine scarcely conscious of shedding light. It is of such as they that Laotze said, "The highest good is like water," seeking lowest places which the great despise and working wonders—none knows how. They put forth no exertion to do good, for they are goodness itself, and the quality of goodness is never strained, dropping like gentle rain from heaven upon the earth beneath, blessing twice—him that takes and him that gives.

This, then, is the Buddhist idea of the good man in tune with ultimate wisdom. Beautiful, no doubt

—but passive, with no initiative; calm with no dynamic force. He cannot be otherwise, though history records many exceptions. He cannot be otherwise, as he is the logical consequence of the faith he espouses, the faithful product of the Buddhist doctrine. Ascribing the ills of life primarily to ignorance, and hence devoting the whole energy to ideation, Buddhism has built up an elaborate edifice of philosophy, its roof reaching the summit of human intelligence, but its foundation lacking in that sense of Personality without which no moral system is possible.

The Ego has been subjected to such a minute scrutiny as to surprise the modern psychologist. Every fibre of its being has been dissected, examined and labelled, its function located and named—finally to be put away as non-existent (*anatta*). To the Buddhist man is in theory a being complete in his structure, in form like an angel and in comprehension like a god. He is treated like a bundle of *libido* wrapped with a keen mind and tied with a frail will. At best, contemplation and introspection dominate his action. Even his compassion and love are sicklied over with a pale cast of reason. Strong impulse is discounted, heroic effort damped; the wings of spontaneity are clipped. Not unlike the mediæval Christian saint, he is not of the earth, neither is he of heavenly mould. He is detached from the human habitation, and the cares of this world do not touch him. Social duties and political activities are trivial in his sight. An economic action is anathema to him. The practical ethics of each work-day are too mundane for him to heed. What action can be expected of one who looks on existence as a vacuity? He is immune from the usual standard of right and wrong, good and bad.

Professor Tachibana eloquently describes a man who has attained a high plane in the Buddhistic conception of spiritual life: "He is not immoral, but we may say that he is super-moral. He has reached the mental condition where there is no consciousness of moral, æsthetical or logical distinction; the relative ideas, therefore, of good and evil, pleasure and pain, agreeableness and disagreeableness, right and wrong, are all annihilated for him. In his action, as well as in his thought, all these distinctions, not merely in idea, but in fact also, are abolished. In others words, he has gone beyond the sphere of morality into that of religion. He is not limited by distinctive ideas, though naturally his action, speech or thought will not be morally bad. Such a person may have no moral consciousness of his conduct." <sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, for the edification of weak brethren, the following five precepts are given: (1) abstinence from destruction of life, (2) abstinence from taking what is not given, (3) abstinence from fornication, (4) abstinence from speaking falsely, and (5) abstinence from drinking intoxicants. The first precept given is far more thoroughgoing than the sixth commandment of the Mosaic Decalogue, forbidding the slaying of animals for sacrificial purposes and even cautioning man against inadvertently killing microscopic beings in water and earth. Likewise, the second precept is more comprehensive than the eighth commandment, as the waste of time by the employé and other forms of theft not usually so considered are included. So with other precepts. They are far more logically thought out than Christian ethics as usually understood. With such flimsy finesse are they spun out that they remind one of the spider's web, both in its frailty and in its

<sup>1</sup> *The Ethics of Buddhism*, p. 55.

proverbial insidiousness. And yet the five Precepts are only elementary requirements made of all Buddhists. There is a set of Eight Precepts which laymen have to observe on special days. Professor Tachibana further enumerates Ten Good Actions, Four Vices belonging to the Mouth, the Three Vices of the Mind—viz. Covetousness, Hatred and Ignorance.

How strict, at least theoretically, the moral requirements of the priesthood were, can be imagined from the huge number of precepts prescribed for the monk. A collection of them in the Patimokkha gives as many as 227. Every detail for the regulation of speech and action is prescribed with such scrupulosity that one wonders if liberty is not a greater blessing than moral perfection. Buddha himself repudiated hair-splitting arguments as of no avail in the practical conduct of life, and recommended his followers to observe "the middle path" as producing insight and knowledge, and as conducive to tranquillity. The writer from whose book we have been quoting says, "The practical nature of morality is conspicuous especially in Buddhism in its primitive period of development, when its disciples flocked around the prominent personality of the Buddha for the purpose of practising *brahmacariya* (holiness) under his guidance."

In his strenuous endeavour to elevate himself above earthly life, the highest follower of Buddhism is apt to forget that the evils and sufferings of humanity, which daily call for his pity and sympathy, are as real to their victims as the most abstract noumenon is to the *bodhisattva*. To get at the noumenon without, he forgets the numen within. If Buddhism offers no other doctrine than Equality, that in itself should urge its followers to more dili-

gence in the alleviation of human suffering. As we have already seen, there were times when this religion was the chief factor in the work of social welfare, in education, in arts and sciences. Its contribution to the civilization and mental uplift of the nation is incalculable. But if we are to estimate its value as an ethical factor, we have to qualify our admiration and gratitude. One wonders whether or not there is an innate weakness in the whole system, a thread missing in the fine-spun fabric of intellectual ingenuity. Or is it in the practical application of its doctrines that the edifice trembles?

The morality of the priestly class has been notoriously corrupt in the past, and, though it has greatly improved and is improving, the more serious of its votaries are still deploring the fact that a large number of the priests are a disgrace to their profession. However, this state of things will mend. To cite the case of the Christian Church in the West as an example of corruption and improvement affords no great consolation, unless Buddhism stresses more the ethical side of its teachings. To claim that their faith stands above good and evil, is fatal to the moral welfare of its professors, who might all claim to be upon that height.

Speaking of the invariable incorporation in the higher reaches of spiritual development, of the moral idea in the body of the religious sentiment, Rudolf Otto says, in his *Idea of the Holy*:<sup>1</sup> "Almost everywhere we find the numinous attracting and appropriating meanings derived from social and individual ideals of obligation, justice and goodness. These become the will of the numen, and the numen their guardian, ordainer and author. More and more these ideas come to enter into the very essence of

<sup>1</sup> English translation by John W. Harvey, p. 114.

the numen, and charge the term with ethical content." Can Buddhism alone be an exception to this general tendency of all higher religions?

Buddhism will find itself more effective in fulfilling its task of the revealer of the Absolute, if it condescends to cope with the practical problems of individual morals and social amelioration. "A tree is known by its fruit," and unless Buddhism bears more abundant and choicer fruit, visible to ordinary eyes, it will dwindle from a great religion to a merely ingenuous school of philosophy.

## 5. CHINESE CLASSICS

How early in the history of Japan Chinese influences were introduced is an unsettled problem of history. The oft-repeated story of a Korean official, Achiki, who became a tutor at the Court in A.D. 384, and of a Chinese savant, Wani, whom he recommended for the post, marks perhaps the date when the study of the Classics was officially recognized and the use of ideographs was adopted in public documents. Before this date, the Chinese classics and ideographs must have been more or less known among some sections of the people—at least among those who had to deal with China, whether in trade or other relations. Court chronicles, even in much later periods, did not note any event, unless it was directly or indirectly connected with the Court. If one were to judge of European influence in Japan exclusively from the records of official papers, one might infer that not a single "Red Beard" ever reached Japan until Commodore Perry did! Even now, one might infer that only one copy of a book called the Holy Bible exists in the whole of Japan, and that a copy presented to the Japanese Crown Prince when he went to England in 1921. We can

very well imagine that ideographs had been used for memory-saving signs and for incantations many years before A.D. 384. As to Chinese stories and legends, many must have been current among the masses.

Only late in the fourth century did the Government begin to adopt the ideographs of China, thereby setting its seal to Chinese learning. There seems to have been no controversy as to the fitness of doing so, as was the case when Buddhism was introduced about a century and a half later. Was this silent acceptance of continental teaching due to the utter lack of ideas on the part of the native leaders who may have been opposed to it? Was it not, rather, that in the preceding years, whatever social and political institutions may have been in operation, they were already strongly penetrated by Chinese and Korean influences?

Scholars were now openly invited by the Court to be tutors to young princes. Some came with immigrants from Korea, and were hired by princely houses to serve as secretaries. There were not a few Chinese and Korean scholars who held high posts in the Government and who were befriended by kings and dukes.

So, for nearly two centuries before Buddhism was introduced into the Court, Chinese learning was cultivated. How far it permeated the thought of the higher classes can be guessed from the Seventeen Principles of Prince Shôtoku, which are full of Confucian expressions. In fact, Buddhist teaching was imported into Japan in Chinese. Hence, even those who would study Buddhism, in preference to Confucianism, had to master the Chinese language. The schools and universities of the middle of the seventh century used Chinese almost exclusively, as those of the early Meiji days used English. It was

only in the tenth century that Japanese displaced Chinese, and even then the diction of cultivated Japanese was full of Chinese words.

The enthusiasm for Chinese ethics is clearly seen in the Government edict issued in the middle of the eighth century—to the effect that every household should provide itself with a copy of the classic on “Filial Piety.”

The spread and influence of Confucian tenets became very pronounced in the following centuries, but in philosophic insight, subtle logic, precision of expression and clarity of logic, the Confucianists were by no means a match for the Buddhists, though the former had the advantage of exercising worldly influence. Confucian doctrine would have proved worthless if it had not had a hold on the things of the world. It held no mysticism, high or deep. It was vague regarding some of the greatest issues of life. Silent about God, silent about the Soul, it taught man how to live in harmony with his fellows, how to serve one's superiors, how to be polite. Entirely of the earth, the Confucian school was earthly. Hence, in China there were Confucianists who looked upon Buddhists as traitors to their human kind. But in Japan, with that capacity for compromise and reconciliation which the race shows in all things, many a Buddhist scholar absorbed Confucian classics. Notably was this the case with a priest, Fujiwara Keian, of the fifteenth century, who in a marked degree succeeded in unifying the two conflicting schools of thought. In those centuries (1300-1600) the country was split into many little baronies, each bent upon annihilating the other, and learning was little cared for. What little learning was cultivated was not for theoretical discussion, but for actual didactic use. Men had to act. They had no time



to study. Of all Buddhist sects, the Zen flourished on that very account. Christianity was introduced during that time, and it spread quickly—partly because its profession opened easy access to fire-arms, but also because it made men fearless of death. Confucianism was convenient in that it taught retainers to be faithful to their masters, and gave little room for disputing the duties which the smaller owe to the greater.

When the country had become pacified under Iyeyasu, he looked for a system of ethics that would suit the circumstances of the time and that would demonstrate the legitimacy of his authority. Such a system he found in the Confucian school of Shushi (Chinese *Chu-Hsi*). This sage flourished in the twelfth century as a statesman, philosopher and historian. His system is of an eclectic character, being mixed with Taoism and Buddhism. Though his metaphysics are abstruse and ambiguous in terminology, he deduces moral inferences from them.

Chu-Hsi's fundamental thesis is that there are two forces in the universe—namely, "*Ri*" (in Chinese *li*) and "*Ki*" (in Chinese *ch'i*).

"*Ri*" has been variously translated in English—reason, law, fate. Ideographically and originally it meant the trimming of gems. Later it was used in the wider sense of putting things to rights, and, still later, of the inherent rightness of things. It means the norm, the standard, the principle of being and of becoming. How far it is an active energy, capable of acting, is not clearly stated; but it is the way that energy works, that things move and that man must act.

"*Ki*" (Chinese *Ch'i*) is nowadays used to mean air, gas, vapour, breath. It is also employed in the more abstract sense of temper or spirit. The ideo-

graph for it seems to suggest the rising of vapour by the heat of the sun or fire, and, therefore, it must have meant some sort of matter in an attenuated condition. Ether is perhaps a fairly near approach to its original signification.

If *Ri* is reason or law, *Ki* is matter, and the two give rise to all the phenomena, physical and spiritual. One would like to ask, "But where is an active force, an efficient cause, to bring about a motion or a change?" *Ri* may be just a static condition; but *Ki* is not an inert mass. It is dynamic. Being vapour, breath, ether—as such it is like a fluid, and contains within itself the power of motion. There are two phases or kinds of *Ki*—"Yin" and "Yo" (Chinese *Yang*). Of these the latter is light, positive, active, male, and the former dark, negative, passive, female. All phenomena owe their origin to the action, reaction, interaction and counteraction of these forces in the three categories of existence—heaven, man and earth. *Yin* and *Yang* seem to have been originally conceived as two primary fluids, primogenial elements, from which the universe and all that is therein has been evolved. Sometimes *Yin* is spoken of as water and *Yo* as fire.

This dualistic idea is carried out into minutest ramifications in philosophy, science and everyday life, so that the distinction between the material and spiritual nature of *Ki* becomes exceedingly confusing. Is it something like that unity of which Sir Oliver Lodge speaks as "neither exactly mind nor exactly matter as we conceive them, but is something fundamental and underlying both—as the ether is now thought of as sustaining, and in some sense constituting, all the phenomena of the universe"?

*Ri* is law immovably fixed and inexorable. He

who violates it must pay a price for his action. It is like a road, a highway, on which man must walk, or else he will fall into a slough. Man can reach his destiny only by a fixed path. *Ri* is *Tao*, the way, and as such *Ri* expresses a moral order—order which lies in the universe, in human society and in each person. Man can perceive it first in his own self. As Mencius says, “*Tao* is near, and men seek it at a distance. Duty lies in what is easy, and men seek it in difficult tasks. Let each man love his parents, and respect his elders, there will then be tranquillity in all the land.” According to the school of Chu-Hsi, *Tao* is the moral aspect of *Ri*, and for practical purposes *Tao* assumed an importance far above *Ri*. It was *Tao* that moralists and statesmen and religionists had to follow and teach, whereas *Ri* was left to philosophers and scientists to study and investigate.

The deeper insight into the essence of *Tao*, to which Laotze gave a mystical expression, was not of much practical use in the governance of a nation. It was even dangerous, in that the doctrine might land one in the negation of all human authority and of all convenient customs. Laotze's teachings were therefore barely tolerated in Tokugawa days. Some utterances of Mencius were similarly held inimical to good social order, unless they were interpreted by the Chu-Hsi school. The works of Wang Yan Ming found no favour with orthodox and official protagonists of Confucianism. Nevertheless does it remain true that Chinese ideas, as taught in Japan, were not free from Buddhistic influence—not a few Confucianists having originally been priests and a few others becoming priests later. There were, however, some scholars who were almost defiant in their attitude towards the followers of Sakya Muni, and

called them by the vilest names. As to Shinto, scarcely any found fault. This is not to be wondered at, seeing that it offers so few doctrines, makes so few declarations. How can any army attract the attention of the enemy when it has no camps or shows no colours flying?

The orthodox Chu-Hsi school, then, as developed in this country, had naturally differed in several points from its original on the continent. Instead of running into the metaphysical niceties and scientific guess-work of the Sung philosophers, it emphasized the didactic and political aspects of its teaching.

From the doctrines of *Yin* and *Yo*, by their combination and perfect development, culminating in the Grand Terminus (*Tai-kyoku*), proceed, on the one hand, the Five Agents—Water, Fire, Wood, Metal and Earth—and, on the other, the Five Virtues—Benevolence, Righteousness, Reverence, Wisdom and Sincerity.

These virtues, in their various combinations and proportions, according to the subject by which, or the object for which, they are exercised, constitute the ethical category of the Confucian school. The well-known five virtues correspond to the five natural relationships of master and servant (ruler and the ruled), of parent and child, of man and wife, of brother and brother, of friend to friend. Each of these virtues has a special name and is valued in gradation according to the traditions of a race. For instance, loyalty, which is the moral duty that a subject owes to his lord, could not have the same concept in Japan as in China, since their social and political institutions were not the same. Even in Japan itself, loyalty, in feudal days, meant fidelity to the feudal lord rather than to the Emperor. The reciprocal duties between parent and child, incul-

cated under strict monogamy, could not be the same as those under the régime of concubinage.

Of the different virtues named, we shall here mention two for particular notice. One is reverence (*rei*), sometimes translated propriety, or courtesy. Rites and ceremonies are the terms sometimes used in translating *rei*; but these are correct only in so far as they are the outward manifestations of reverence. If this mistaken notion of *rei* were restricted to translation, it would not be nearly so bad; but in actual life in the Orient, and particularly in the life of the past, this mistake had serious consequences, in that man put more stress upon outward conduct—manners and forms and formalities—than upon the motives of action. The much-praised “politeness” of the Orientals is the fruit of the excessive emphasis placed on propriety.

The same interpretation of *rei*, however, failed to extend to wider circles than those of personal acquaintances and of men of acknowledged social position. Reverence was encouraged towards one’s social equals or superiors, but not to man, to personality, as such. Hence there was little respect paid to the demos; and hence, too, there was scarcely any idea of public morality. The shameful lack of propriety in the street, or in public means of conveyance, is due to apathy as regards the feelings of those mutually unacquainted, and to the exaggerated demand for outward forms of propriety obligatory upon acquaintances. People easily forget that politeness must spring spontaneously from the heart, and that instructed manners are to be considered only as secondary. In a classical paragraph, Mencius speaks of the primary impulses of behaviour, which he calls the ends or terminals. Says he, “Hence we may see that were it not that he

possesses a solicitous mind, man would not be man; were it not that he possesses a conscientious mind, man would not be man; were it not that he possesses a morally discriminating mind, man would not be man. Solicitude is the terminal of Love; conscientiousness is the terminal of Righteousness; courtesy is the terminal of Reverence; moral insight is the terminal of Wisdom."

The healthy instinct is often sacrificed for the sake of convention, and man's free action is thereby checked and his moral development arrested.

Likewise is it with another "virtue"—Benevolence, or Love ("jin" in Japanese). Chu-Hsi makes distinction between *ai* (ordinarily translated love) and *jin* (benevolence). *Ai* is an emotion; it is affection. What Mencius called solicitude in the passage quoted is an affectionate concern for another's well-being. Mr. Bruce <sup>1</sup> has defined *jin* as "emotion love based on an ethical foundation." *Jin* is the sum total of all virtues. It is synonymous with virtue. In reading the exposition of *jin* by Shushi one finds oneself almost at the gate of the Christian doctrine. But, here again, as in the case of propriety, the objective aspect has been so strongly emphasized that the all-embracing ideal of Love as law is often set aside, and we are engrossed with manifold and separate loves—namely, to a lord, a parent, a friend. When outward duties are emphasized more than the inner motive, virtues lose their spontaneity and genuineness. They become artificial and formal. As Amiel says, "Analysis kills spontaneity, just as grain, once it is ground into flour, no longer springs and germinates." The over-emphasis on propriety, and the stress laid in Chinese ethics on the social distinctions of the parties we

<sup>1</sup> *Chu-Hsi and his Masters*, p. 266.

deal with, have killed the genial spontaneity of action, depriving benevolence of warmth and reverence of sincerity.

During the whole of the Tokugawa Period, the Chu-Hsi school held a supreme place in the Japanese world of thought and learning. Iyeyasu admired the wisdom and character of Fujiwara Seikwa, and, having his pupil, Hayashi Razan, under his patronage, fostered the Chu-Hsi school. Then, as learning was considered a special profession, it was made hereditary in the house of Hayashi. Both Seikwa and Razan were broad-minded men, but some of their successors were too jealous of their profession and position, and at times trespassed upon the field of literature, persecuting their opponents and making their own views the only right interpretation of Confucius and Mencius.

Their persecuting spirit did not attain its end. Heterodoxy sprang up in several schools—notably in the Wang Yan Ming school. This school exercised a deep influence and produced profound scholars, as well as heroic characters and practical statesmen. There was also started a school which claimed to teach classical Confucianism, pure and simple. It was opposed to the dualistic and passive character of Chu-Hsi's teaching, and its advocates distinguished themselves as publicists and economists. Still another school may be termed eclectic, and its followers took an active part in politics and administration.

Thus while instances are on record of intolerance regarding unorthodox ideas, Chinese classics of all shades enjoyed a tolerable amount of freedom. But what for a time appeared fatal was the utter neglect of them upon the introduction of Western thought. In the first two decades of Meiji, Chinese studies fell to a lower status. The schools and universities

had no Chinese classics in their curricula. For a time, it seemed as though they were to be consigned to oblivion.

But, later, saner opinion prevailed. The old learning was of too good stuff to throw away. Both by reason of historical and didactic values, it is again coming into favour. Some conservative minds see in it a safer moral discipline than in the newly introduced Western notions of human relations. In view of the activities of the Marxian Communists, educational thinkers are said to be considering a revival of Chinese classics as an antidote to ultra-radicalism. When an old wineskin has once been broken and its contents spilt, patching up the rent will not restore its value. New Japan will not return to the old classics. The Chinese classics will be viewed as literature and regarded as mental training, much as Latin and Greek are treated in Europe. The people will go on quoting hackneyed phrases from ancient writers, but the study of an ancient literature will be pursued as an undertaking of specialists.

## 6. BUSHIDO THE PRECEPTS OF KNIGHTHOOD <sup>1</sup>

However superior in its intellectual content a system of foreign teaching may be, it cannot penetrate the nation's mind. A national mind is so much the product of environment and tradition, that an idea of foreign origin must needs pass through certain transformations before it can be made exactly to fit a new people. We have already seen that Buddhism and Chinese philosophy had to modify some of their doctrines and tenets in order to be acclimatized in Japan. But in these cases they remained essentially foreign, however much the

<sup>1</sup> See the author's *Bushido, the Soul of Japan*.



modification was effected. The main body of the doctrines remained Indian or Chinese.

When, however, the nation's soul, urged from within, expresses its thoughts under the peculiar circumstances in which its body is placed, and if the soul in doing so assimilates to itself whatever is within its reach, we have a truly national product, efficient in action and genuine in quality.

Such a product was Bushidô, the Way of Knights. If we analyse it, we can reduce its components to the different systems of faith and schools of thought that came to Japan from the continent. Its originality consists in the combination and not in its elements. In a better sense—namely, in the sense used by Carlyle—Bushidô is original. "The merit of originality," he says, "is not novelty, it is sincerity. The believing is the original man; whatsoever he believes, he believes it for himself, not for another." The *samurai* believed in his mission; he was proud of it; he thought no other deserved to be called man; he felt the burden of his responsibility to keep the world in order. These were his convictions, in which he did not waver. To these conclusions he came not by logical reasoning, nor by any philosophy or religion, but by the realities of actual life.

When, in the Heian Period, the power of the Court waned and its authority was not observed in far-off provinces, everybody had to defend himself. Man was esteemed for the number of his fellow-men whom he could defend. The *samurai* was a defender not only of himself, but also of peasants or tradesmen. The higher *samurai* defended lower *samurai*. He was thus a man of action. He had little time for mere theory. But as he was not always on the field—as he had, in fact, plenty of time for con-

templation—he could the more cultivate arts of peace. Better still, he could meditate on the principles and significance of his profession. He was a curious mixture of different creeds and traditions. Mr. Lowes Dickinson gives in a few words a vivid picture of the *samurai*. Says he: “Japanese feudalism converted the Buddha’s doctrine of renunciation into the stoicism of the warrior. The Japanese *samurai* renounced desire, not that he might enter Nirvana, but that he might acquire the contempt of life which would make him a perfect warrior. In him, the knight included and swallowed up the saint. And the *samurai*, meditating in a tea-house on the beauty, the brevity, and the pathos of life, and passing out to kill or to die, is as typical of the Japanese attitude to life as the wandering *sannyasin* is of the Indian.”

The principle that should guide him in his profession as the defender of the weak, the guardian of the helpless, form what may be called Bushidô, the *noblesse oblige* of the *samurai* class. In a wider sense, Bushidô ought to include the arts which a good *samurai* should master—the technical requirement of the profession—such as fencing, jujitsu, horsemanship, the use of the spear, archery and the like. It ought also to include mental educational instruction, *e.g.* reading, writing, etiquette, and the more refined arts for entertainment. In the days when the *samurai* was all-powerful—say from the eleventh to the twentieth centuries—even amusements and pastimes were so graded that some were considered proper for his rank and dignity, while others were despised. He could play with impunity some kinds of stringed instruments or flutes, but he was expected not to touch others that were deemed detrimental to his morals because of

light associations. "The Way of the Knight" should include every branch of knowledge that a perfect *samurai* ought to acquire. But the main aspect of Bushidô which we shall survey in the present chapter will be confined to the ethical side of the "Way."

The starting-point of *samurai* training is the cultivation of the sense of shame. A man who lacked this lost his claim to the profession of arms. Shame is the soil from which grow all good manners and morals. The Shinto theory of *Kan-nagara* makes man divine, a creation of perfect equipoise—but, when the balance rod dips, there arises an uncomfortable feeling or a sense of deep degradation "excited by the consciousness of having done something unworthy of one's own previous idea of one's excellence." This feeling of a breach of decorum or decency is shame, and we become conscious of it when we have a standard by which to judge our thoughts or actions—a law existing either within us or without, and binding us to obedience. Statutes and public opinion, promises and customs, are outside laws, but *Kan-nagara* is the power of individual judgment, which sets a certain standard for us to follow; the instant *Kan-nagara* is violated, shame arises in our breast to warn or rebuke us. The first duty of the *samurai* is to keep this criterion intact. But, as we have already seen, the character of the divinity within us is itself human or naturalistic, or, as old Christian theologians would say, "natural and not revealed." Hence the *samurai's* standard of right and goodness was too often decided by outward human relations, rather than by the inward voice of the Spirit. This was almost inevitable, since he was primarily a man of action, in daily contact with "the world and the devil"—and not of

meditation. He knew better things than those he did, and he was ashamed when he could not live up to his light, but pressing circumstances and his many loyalties made demands upon him which, humanly, he could not resist. When these demands conflicted with his ideas of right and goodness so powerfully that he could not calm his conscience, he had to get rid of the dilemma by dispatching himself or by giving up his profession. When he took the latter course, he usually retired from the world and donned a priest's garb. Actual life is full of contradictions and dilemmas, and a *samurai's* life was one of constant conflict. One well-known *daimyo* writes : "How smoothly glides a fowl upon the water, but beneath the surface how incessantly move its paddling feet !"

Iyeyasu, the typical *samurai*, has left a legacy of advice which reads : "Life is like unto a long journey with a heavy burden. Let thy step be slow and steady, that thou stumble not. Persuade thyself that imperfection and inconvenience are the natural lot of mortals, and there will be no room for discontent, neither for despair. When ambitious desires arise in thy heart, recall the days of extremity through which thou hast passed. Forbearance is the root of quietness and assurance forever. Look upon wrath as thy enemy. If thou knowest only what it is to conquer, and knowest not what it is to be defeated, woe unto thee ; it will fare ill with thee. Find fault with thyself rather than with others."

These words of Iyeyasu have sometimes been criticized as too negative in tone, but when we remember by what kind of man, and for what kind of men, they were written—when we remember that they were written by one, and for those, whose

calling was to act and to whom immense power was entrusted, a negative tone will be found appropriate as discipline.

Iyeyasu did not enumerate the usual list of virtues which a *samurai* was expected to observe. He took it for granted that they were familiar, and his admonitions referred to the manner in which the *samurai* should observe the requirements made of him.

The positive requirements, to fall short of which was shame, were the so-called five primary duties of loyalty and filiality to which other duties were sometimes subordinated as derivations. Both of these terms imply passive obedience and are opposed to self-assertion. To observe them means to be reverent—and reverence is piety. Loyalty may be viewed as the beginning and end of all moral life. "Loyalty to loyalty" has been demonstrated as such by Royce.<sup>1</sup> In Bushidô, loyalty was considered to have for its object the master, be he king or an employer.

I have intimated in a preceding section that the idea of *chu* (loyalty) cannot be the same in China and in Japan, though brought from China. That is to say, the term *chu* is Chinese in origin, and has no equivalent in Japanese. Strange to say, a virtue so valued in the Bushidô régime, and so emphasized at the present day, has no Japanese name. But this does not argue that the sentiment itself is foreign. Far from it! In the traditions handed down from times prior to the introduction of Chinese culture, we see that the sentiment existed in the earliest period of our race; but it bore no separate name. It was known simply as a manifestation of *makoto* (sincerity, truth) towards a sovereign.

<sup>1</sup> *The Philosophy of Loyalty*, Ch. III.

An abstract ethical term is like a hollow vessel. It may mean much if it is filled with deeds or legends, exploits and examples. It must be illustrated by real actions. It is the lives actually lived by the great and the good that impart life and meaning to an abstract moral idea. Thus, from concrete cases is a general term adduced, and, when this is once accomplished, the actual cases are used simply as illustrations of some great idea. Without a history and long experience no noble idea can be conceived, no ethical sentiment trained. Stubbs<sup>1</sup> hit the mark exactly when he said of loyalty: "The name of king cannot have been synonymous with oppression; loyalty itself, in its very name, recalls the notion of trust in law, and observance of law; and the race which calls it forth as well as the nation that feels it, must have been on the whole a law-abiding race and nation. It gathers into itself all that is admirable and lovable in the character of the ruler, and the virtues of the good king unquestionably contribute to strengthen the habit of loyalty to all kings." Then the great scholar continues with this significant remark: "Such loyalty gives far more than it receives; the root of the good is in the loyal people, not in the sovereign, who may or may not deserve it."

Of which nation's history Stubbs was thinking when he wrote these lines, I am not told. But that his remarks apply with singular force to Japanese history, is most worthy of notice. In the long period of some twenty centuries during which 124 rulers ascended the throne, we have an intimate and detailed account of some of them; they are presented in their daily life. Some of them are described in their exile, others in privation and

<sup>1</sup> Stubbs, *Constitutional History of England*, Vol. III., p. 549.

distress. How human, naïve, natural and lovable ! The simple word *Kan-nagara* expresses a characteristic common to them all, irrespective of other qualities.

The Japanese sentiment of loyalty, so emphasized by Bushidô, is thus a sentiment little shared by other peoples, and therefore perhaps not perfectly intelligible.

Next to loyalty, Bushidô insists on filial piety as a requirement of a faithful *samurai*.

*Kô* (filial duty) is another of those imported Chinese terms, for which there was no Japanese equivalent. It meant the love and duty which a child owes to his parents. In the order of psychological development, it is the first moral sense to evolve. But as, politically and socially, loyalty takes precedence, these two are always put together as twin virtues—one at home, the other in the community and in the State. The affection that a child feels for his parents is so natural that it seems almost superfluous to insist upon its cultivation. But in the artificial society created by feudalism—with strict primogeniture, corporate family responsibility, the neglect of woman's rights, concubinage, adoption, etc.—*Kô* had to be enforced as the last resort of appeal, when law and reason were not sufficient to sustain *patria potesta*. It must be admitted that no small abuse was made by parents of the sanctity of *Kô*. Especially hard did it press on the girls of the family. Not infrequently were they sacrificed at the altar of *Kô*—only to be sold into slavery for immoral purposes. The parents thought it within their rights to demand such sacrifices, and the daughters accepted them as their duty.

It is impossible to use the same line of argument

for the explanation of filial duty that Stubbs employed in explaining the evolution of loyalty. Filiality can be said, in a great many cases, to give more than it receives—many parents not deserving it as sovereigns deserve loyalty. Notwithstanding its abuse, it must be said that the family group owes its unification to the culture of this sentiment, and, without it, individualism in its worst form of egotism would have rent the nation itself; for *Kô*, when it is rightly exercised, is not limited in its sphere of action to the narrow precincts of a single home, much less to the two individuals (parents), but is expansive and limitless in its scope. The essential character of *Kô* is affection combined with reverence. A Swiss psychologist, Pierre Bovet, has found, in his study of Religion, that faith is the outgrowth of the child's trust and affection, fear and respect, for its parent. By learning in childhood to love and confide in our parents, we take the first step in that long spiritual journey, at the end of which are the love and the utter surrender of self to that Unseen Source of our life.

Loyalty and filiality, as the mainstays of Bushidô, have succeeded in sustaining for centuries a solid social structure. That structure had many points of weakness. It was not a jural state. What meagre laws it did provide itself with were far from perfect or complete. It was not a democratic state. What few rights the common people enjoyed were not legalized. It was not a progressive state. What occasional reforms and changes it underwent were not always in accord with reason. On the whole, however, stability, peace and order were vouchsafed by the general dissemination of the moral and emotional teachings of Bushidô.

The morality and emotionality of Bushidô lend



to it the character of a religion. And yet it is not a religious system. It is not a system of any kind. It has no set creed. Very few have written treatises on it. The nearest approach to a systematic presentation was made by one Yamaga Sokô, in the middle of the seventeenth century.

Yamaga Sokô was well acquainted with the great literature of the Han, T'ang, Sung and Ming dynasties. He studied Buddhism and Laotze and Wang Yan Ming. He was little satisfied with them all and returned to Confucius as the only true fountain-head of learning and morals. He professed unalloyed faith in the sage, but looked upon his professed followers as heterodox. While most Japanese scholars of his time looked to China as a model in everything, he insisted upon the superiority of Japan, which he called "The True Central Kingdom." He was a patriot to the core. In him were combined deep erudition, broad knowledge, unbounded energy and strong will-power. He was thus a typical *samurai*, and though he did nothing practical himself, he left writings which had a decidedly practical effect. Among those who admired and followed him were men who left an indelible impress upon the soul of the nation. To mention but a few of the best known—Oishi, the leader of the Forty-Seven Ronin, Yoshida Shoin, an eminent pioneer of the Meiji era, Nogi, the hero of Port Arthur.

In Yamaga's case, as intimated, the well of inspiration was Confucius, whose teachings he absorbed and made Japan's. Bushidô is not Confucianism; but Confucianism is a part of Bushidô. Likewise Buddhism—Zen doctrines in particular—was assimilated and made a part of Bushidô. Shinto is naturally allied with it. Not pretending to be a system, but a loose bundle of all the good things borrowed

from every quarter, Eclecticism is always weak. Yes, as a system of thought. But Bushidô is not a system of thought. It is an unwritten code of honour. Many different threads of thought helped in the weaving of the fabric. But it is really not with the fabric, as such, that Bushidô can be compared. Its life may be likened to the act of weaving or wearing—not to a completed object. It is not a theory. It is life. “*Grau ist alle Theorie: ewig gruen ist des Lebens goldener Baum.*”

As an independent teaching, Bushidô has now no place in the social life of the people, but it is still a living force. This cannot be otherwise, now that the social conditions which necessitated some of its tenets have become obsolete. When criminal laws are executed, there is no need for vendetta. Shall we say that since the pistol, the railway track and other means of suicide have become easily accessible, *seppuku*, or *harakiri*, will go out of fashion and a more cowardly way prevail? None the less do the more vital precepts of the Way of the Knights remain, clothed in a new garb. The so-called National Ethics, of which we have spoken in Chapter VI, contain all that was inculcated in Bushidô. Better still, they are embodied in a succinct form in the Imperial Rescript on Education, which is a declaration of the duties that a Japanese subject is bound to observe.

“Know Ye, Our Subjects: Our Imperial Ancestors have founded our Empire on a basis broad and everlasting, and have deeply and firmly implanted virtue. Our subjects, ever united in loyalty and filial piety, have from generation to generation illustrated the beauty thereof. This is the glory and fundamental character of our Empire, and herein also lies the source of our education. Ye, our subjects, be filial to your parents, affectionate to your brothers and sisters; as husbands and wives, be harmonious; as friends, true; bear yourselves in modesty

and moderation; extend your benevolence to all; pursue learning and cultivate the arts and thereby develop intellectual faculties and perfect moral powers; furthermore, advance public good and promote common interests; always respect the Constitution and observe the laws; should emergency arise, offer yourselves courageously to the State and thus guard and maintain the prosperity of our Imperial Throne, coeval with heaven and earth. So shall ye not only be our good and faithful subjects, but render illustrious the best traditions of your forefathers. The way here set forth is indeed the teaching bequeathed by our Imperial Ancestors, to be observed alike by their descendants and the subjects, infallible for all ages and true in all places. It is our wish to take it to heart in all reverence, in common with you our subjects, that we may all thus attain to the same virtue."

A glance at the Rescript shows evident marks of foreign influence; but none the less the whole is a document of the most genuine product of the nation's mind.

## 7. CHRISTIANITY AND ITS REPERCUSSION

Just to refresh our memory, in order to see the historical continuity of Western influence in Japan, let us enumerate here a few facts.

Perhaps the first mention of Japan in a European language—and that under the name of Cipangu—was made by Marco Polo. His report of the country was founded on the stray and wild account given him while he was in China. It was from Marco Polo's report that Paolo Toscanelli placed Japan, on his map of 1474, about 1500 miles east of China. No wonder Columbus believed until his death that he had reached Cipangu when he landed at San Domingo!

The bitter rivalry in exploration between Spain and Portugal was settled by the issue of the famous Papal Bull of Pope Alexander VI. in 1493. This divided the world into two parts—the Western Hemi-

sphere to belong to Spain and the Eastern to Portugal. Under this arrangement, Vasco da Gama sailed to the Malabar Coast of India, 1498, and planted the Portuguese flag wherever he landed. It was the halcyon day of Portuguese navigators, and rightly called forth national enthusiasm in Camoens' epic of *The Lusiads*. In 1510 Goa was taken and the basis of the Portuguese Far Eastern Empire was established. Portuguese navigators soon reached Malacca, and in 1561 they arrived in China. But Japan, for some reason or other, did not attract the attention of the adventurers, and would not have been visited had it not been for a fortuitous wind that was instrumental in wrecking a small *junco*, in 1542, on the western coast of Kyûshû.

A few years later came three Portuguese tradesmen, one of whom, Mendez Pinto, soon made himself famous by the vivid description he gave of Japan, and by having carried with him to Goa two Japanese fugitives. One of these became the first Japanese convert to Christianity. Anjiro (or Yajiro) came under the influence of Francis Xavier in Goa, and was instrumental in inducing the great Jesuit to begin his missionary work in this country in 1549.

By this time there developed a brisk trade between Portuguese India and Japan. The most important article of trade was arms, and it is not improbable that the acquisition of this commodity was the chief motive in the minds of many *daimyo* in Kyûshû who favoured the work of the Jesuit Fathers. It happened that Buddhism was in those days at a very low ebb of spiritual life. Some more worldly minded prelates were aspiring to political power, rivalling the *daimyo* and making themselves hated by the laity, while the more seriously minded of the barons

found in Christianity something lacking in the religious profession of those around them. The personality of the preacher must have impressed his hearers and seekers. Thousands flocked to hear Xavier, and, though he did not stay long in the country, within thirty years of his departure 150,000 names were registered in the Church record as followers of the new faith.

As is not uncommon with new converts, their zeal sometimes carried them beyond moderation in dealing with the older faiths, and they made enemies of Buddhists, Confucianists and Shintoists. While these enemies were arousing against Christianity the opposition of the authorities and the hatred of the populace,<sup>1</sup> there took place, it was said, an incident which furnished the first cause for persecution.

It was reported that a Spanish seaman, in a fit of good humour while feasting, said that the reason Spain had grown great was because she sent out missionaries to corrupt the mind of a country, and then sent out troops to take it.

All of a sudden, the goodwill of the Tokugawa Government turned into suspicion and resentment. All the foreigners residing in Japan were ordered, on pain of death, to leave the country—with the exception of the Dutch, who, being Protestants, were opposed to the Spanish and Portuguese friars. The order was rigorously carried out. Not only that, but no foreigner was allowed to come into, and no native to go out of, the land. The profession of Christianity was strictly forbidden. The whole country was hermetically sealed to the rest of the world. If ever there was a law scrupulously

<sup>1</sup> For a psychological study of rejection of Christianity see Price's *Christian Missions and Oriental Civilizations*, Chs. IV., V., VI.

and consistently executed by espionage and punishment, it was this anti-Christian and isolation law of the Tokugawa Shôgunate.

The law continued from 1637 until the Meiji era. In the later days of its interdiction, however, the Christian faith was simply regarded as neither good nor evil. *Mokkyo* (silent permission, toleration) was the legal treatment it received. Such was the attitude of the authorities, and it marked a great advance in the march of liberty. But far more important was the attitude of the popular mind to the "evil religion," as Christianity was called. The people were educated to fear and hate it. This prejudice was systematically cultivated. A grave question is, Are the Japanese people intolerant of an alien faith? Are they bigoted? Are they so self-centred that they do not lend their ears to any other voice than their own? History gives the answer. Formalistic Confucius was welcomed, apparently without any friction. Democratic Mencius and other high apostles of classic note followed. Buddha, together with his quarrelling disciples, was received—it is true with some grumbling at first—and taken close to the bosom. Mystic Laotze and his inscrutable adherents were not repulsed. The egoist Yang and the cosmopolite Mih were read and tolerated. For centuries, Japan had been the home of the orthodox and the heterodox, where the wolf and the lamb had been dwelling together, and the leopard had lain with the kid, and the fatling had lived with the lion without harm. The intolerance shown to Christianity was therefore an abnormal psychological aberration, intended as a policy to divert popular attention from something more vital to the State.

Iyeyasu might usurp the supreme power—barring the title of the sovereign—by buffeting his numerous

competitors, and yet, when he succeeded, there still remained smouldering ashes which might burst into flame at the first favourable moment. What better pretext was there that his beaten foes should forget their enmity and thoughts of revenge, than to dangle before their eyes a common hypothetical enemy? How many hostile Christian countries were united in the crusades against the Turks! How many Christian sects were joined in faith by hating the Jews! But this was not the whole reason for artificially and artfully prompting the anti-foreign sentiment. Iyeyasu's most dreaded rivals were at the southern end of the Empire, in Kyûshû—the region easiest of access by foreign ships. By the exclusion law he could prevent his rivals from being supplied with European arms and ammunition.

Thus considered, the exclusion policy and the anti-Christian law were an ostensible reason put forth for the real and hidden motive of preserving a princely family. Iyeyasu more than once showed evidences of a xenophilistic tendency—"Even if a devil should visit my realm from hell," said he to a Spaniard who calumniated the Portuguese, "he would be treated like an angel from heaven." See how he patronized an honest Christian man, Will Adams, and his colleague.

Even if it can be proved that his antipathy to Christianity was genuine, it is highly doubtful whether the sentiment was shared by the people. The very fact that Xavier and his successors reaped a harvest of thousands of souls in a few years, and were about to gather in more, shows how ripe the people were for the Gospel.

When, therefore, the Protestant missionaries arrived in Japan immediately after the country was opened, they discovered themselves in a most

peculiar atmosphere.<sup>1</sup> Here they found a Draconian law, enforced by the most elaborately developed process—yet the men charged with carrying it out working mechanically, obviously with no stomach for their work. Here they found a people intensely curious to hear “the glad tidings,” but shy and timorous; a people naturally liberal, but prodded into bigotry; earnest, but putting on an air of indifference; polite and passive, but keenly observant and critical of missionary personnel and method.

It was providential that the pioneers of modern mission work in Japan were men of the largest mental calibre, equal to their task, which required utmost courage and tact, intelligence and sympathy. Of such calibre were Williams, Hepburn, Berry, Brown, Verbeck, Thompson, Shaw, Greene, Janes and Harris. Women, too, of the finest type and dauntless spirit came out. It is difficult to say in which kind of activity they served their cause best—whether in the building of churches, or in beginning schools, or in philanthropic and social work. Their relative importance will be gauged differently by those who judge them—according as they place most weight on evangelism, education or charity.

The contributions of Christianity to the religious thought of the nation have been well summarized by Mr. Hiyane,<sup>2</sup> who says in substance: (1) While Shintoism taught polytheism, and Buddhism taught atheism, Christianity preached the one only God and His moral law; (2) the Oriental religions taught Pantheism, Christianity presents a clear-cut idea of personality based on Theism; (3) the Japanese

<sup>1</sup> For a clear and succinct account of modern missions see Galen Fisher, *Creative Forces in Japan*, Ch. V.

<sup>2</sup> *The Japan Mission Year Book for 1929*, Ch. XVII.



religions put less stress upon the intimate connection between religion and morality, tending as a result towards antinomianism, but Christianity emphasizes the close relation between religion and morality; (4) while Shintoism explains sin as uncleanness, and Buddhism interprets it as ignorance, Christianity teaches that sin is the conscious misusing of free-will and selfishness against God.

It is not, however, the theological arguments, or the philosophical presentation of the Christian doctrines, that have most attracted the attention of the Japanese public. "By their fruits ye shall know them." It is what Christian followers have actually accomplished, the life they have led, the character they have built, as well as the tangible results they have shown in their activity for the social and moral betterment of humanity, that have established their reputation. The influence which the Christian faith has exerted on modern Japan is in no proportion to the numbers of its communicants, of whom there are only a little more than 200,000. While this number includes many who are only nominal believers, it must be recorded that there are thousands who accept wholly or in part the teachings of Christianity, but who do not belong to any ecclesiastical organization.

The service which the Christian Church has rendered in education is incalculable. Some of the best educational institutions are directed by it. The finest hospital in the whole of Japan is a missionary enterprise. It is principally staffed by Japanese physicians; but the accommodation and management and the training of nurses are thoroughly American, and the spirit permeating all its ramifications is Christian. Leprosy is best cared for by Christian missionaries. Slum work is largely in the

hands of devoted Christian men and women. The admirable relief work of the Salvation Army has been repeatedly acknowledged by the Government.

One remarkable difference between the Christian missionaries in China or Korea and those in Japan has been the part taken by them in the politics of the respective countries. On the continent they tried to exercise more or less political influence—ultimately to their own discredit and to that of the cause which they represented. In Japan they wisely held aloof, and yet the leaders of advanced political views are almost all men of Christian conviction. The Labour parties are practically led by Christians. To the ears of those who are natives of so-called Christendom, the status of professing Christians in this country, as described above, may sound strange. But in a country where their religion was an object of persecution until the year 1873, and where, by inertia, anti-Christian traditions have wielded a great power, it takes correspondingly strong will-power to make public profession of that faith. No worldly gain whatever is to be expected by so doing. Those who espoused the faith in the early days of Meiji had to fight their way against popular prejudice and public disfavour, but, because these pioneers have won respect, it has become easier to be a Christian. Correspondingly, a new type of Christian is now evolving—a gentler, meeker type, as against the earlier combatant one. And the meek shall inherit the earth!

When the meek shall have inherited the earth, they will make of it a new earth—and add, over and above this, a new heaven. To use less metaphorical language, Christianity will contribute to Japanese culture new vistas of thought and new energy for action. Our experience with exotic creeds

emboldens us to believe that the introduction of another foreign system of faith will add a new cubit to the stature of the nation's mind, without depriving its predecessors of their authority. Indeed, each new creed enlightened the old. Though thus the outward institutions, and perhaps some doctrinal interpretations, may change, the essence of Christ's teachings will remain the same, and will work as a leaven in the spiritual and practical redemption of the country. The religious usages—the language, ceremonies and rites, the priest's garb, etc.—of Buddhism still remain alien, after they have been practised among us for fifteen centuries. The adaptation of Christian usages in the last half-century gives hope of its speedier assimilation by our people. The Japanese congregations may, and likely will, evolve new forms of Christianity. We have been attracted by the superiority of Western ideas without dipping into the motives and the spirit which underlie them.

We talk of liberty; but is the idea of liberty possible without that of personality, which Christianity has brought into human consciousness? John Stuart Mill has treated liberty entirely apart from religion; but historians will scarcely be able to sever the two. Without the right conception of personality, liberty is mere licence.

We talk of equality; but is the idea of equality possible without that of the brotherhood of man, which is a corollary drawn from the belief in the Fatherhood of one God? Confucius spoke of the "brotherhood of the four seas"; but he gave no reason for this universal relationship. Mencius knew the value of individuality, but not of personality.

We talk of woman's rights and female suffrage; but can we have a just conception of sex equality

without grasping the higher synthesis of personal equality of all individuals?

We talk of social justice, of amelioration and relief; but is it possible to comprehend their real import, without first accepting the spiritual relation of man to man in the scheme of the universe—as has been taught by Christianity? Justice, compassion, pity, figure largely in other faiths than the Christian, but only as social virtues, and not as duties which man is bound to perform toward his Creator rather than to his fellow-creatures.

Nothing is farther from truth than to call Christianity an alien faith, excepting as it means a new importation. It should not be more alien to the Japanese than the doctrines of Confucius or Sakya Muni. If it is more alien because of the geographical distance of its place of origin, may we not say that, intellectually and spiritually, it is nearer to Japanese thought now than it was to the Occidental when it was first introduced into Europe? Think of the intellectual status of the Celtic peoples in the fourth century or of the Scandinavians in the ninth, when Christianity was first preached among them. Think of Constantine, who, when he saw the Vision of the Flaming Cross in the sky with the legend "By this sign shalt thou conquer," could interpret it only in the sense of conquest by physical force. He had no idea of winning Maxentius in the spirit of the Cross. He knew only the power of the flaming sword. It would seem that the early European converts were not spiritually ripe for a teaching so advanced. It may be they received it as unsophisticated children. Certainly they were not ready to understand its doctrines. But, thanks to tutelage under Confucian and Buddhist and Bushidô masters, modern Japan is nearer in comprehension to the teachings of Christ

than were His first European followers. The way by which our nation is approaching Christianity is different from the way taken by Western nations. They had a straighter road to traverse, except in Rome. We wind along the streams and mountain-paths faintly marked by crosses and still pointing in the right direction, and before very long the Christian faith, enriched by the intellectual treasures of centuries and deepened by Oriental mysticism, will be a part of the forces which will drive the nation towards its destiny.

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